

# THE CHURCH

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# THE CHURCH

OR

WHAT DO ANGLICANS MEAN BY THE CHURCH?

Nihil Obstat.

T. LALOR

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WHAT DO ANGLICANS MEAN BY THE CHURCH?

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BY

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## PREFACE

*TO THE SECOND EDITION OF "THE CHURCH"*

IN this Edition I have made considerable alterations in the arrangement of the book. I have placed at the beginning the chapters on the Nature of the Church. In these chapters I consider, first, what a Church must be, if it is to be anything worth discussion ; and then, what must be its characteristics and constitution if it is to carry out the purposes for which it was established.

These subjects are discussed in three chapters which consider "What is a Church?" "The Church as Christ's Witness on Earth," and "The Church as the appointed Teacher and Guide of Men."

These questions appear to me to be the very centre of all religious controversy, and I think they are often overlooked, whilst other subjects, really less important, are put more prominently forward.

The second part of the book is taken up in answering some of the common objections which are made to what people call the "Roman theory." The High Church party in the Church of England try to establish a theory of the Church in which they think

they can escape what they consider the difficulties contained in the Catholic view, and, at the same time, keep substantially to the principle of Church authority. I have endeavoured to show that no compromise is possible, and that any theory which makes the Church a real authority, involves precisely those difficulties which are supposed to be involved in the Roman system.

Either you must have an unbending absolute teaching authority, such as the Catholic Church claims and exercises, or you must fall back upon simple private judgment.

The objections in this second part are taken from the late Dr. Mahan's "Exercise of Faith," a book which originally appeared in 1851, and was republished in 1877, with a Preface by Rev. A. Brinckman, then of All Saints', Margaret Street. This is a book of considerable ability, and was a good deal thought of in its time. It is now rather out of date, and it is somewhat forgotten by people in the present day. The objections and arguments which it contains, however, are constantly re-appearing in one shape or another, and it presents a great many subjects for interesting discussions.

In the first edition, I gave a summary of the objections contained in each chapter, in as forcible a way as I could, and then proceeded to answer them.

This plan, however, does not seem to have succeeded, and readers were sometimes confused between the objections and the answers. Accordingly, I have omitted the summary, and have contented myself with a few words explaining the general subject, hoping that the substance of each objection would be sufficiently clear from the answer.

In the course of these chapters, I have treated of most of the important questions between us and our High Church friends, and I hope the discussion may be found interesting and useful.

At the end, there is a short treatise on the Catholic Doctrine of Intention. This, I think, is very important, because that doctrine is a stumbling-block to many, although the subject does not properly come into the question of the Authority of the Church.

J. B. B.

ST. ELIZABETH'S,  
RICHMOND, *April* 1899.





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# THE CHURCH



## CHAPTER I

### WHAT IS A CHURCH?

No definition attempted by Anglicans—A body—Prophecies—Visible and conspicuous—Definite limits—Organization—Different ranks—Central Authority—Purpose for which organized—Witness—Teacher—Anglican Church—Cardinal Newman—The Catholic Church.

**I** PROPOSE in this book to treat of the Church, and the characteristics of the Church. This appears to be, in one sense, the greatest of all religious questions, or rather, it is the point on which all religious discussion turns.

Has Almighty God left a distinct living body upon earth, with power to teach in His Name, or has He not? If He has, what must be the necessary and essential characteristics of such a body? There is not much use in discussing any other religious question until this is settled.

We see around us, in the Church of England, a very decided movement towards the doctrine, practices, and feelings of the Catholic Church, which is wonderful, consoling, and hopeful. How astonished would our fathers have been to hear all the most distinguishing doctrines of the

Roman Church so zealously and earnestly announced from the pulpits of the Established Church !

One thing is wanting, however, and that is the most important. With all their study of Catholic doctrines and practices, these excellent clergymen never seem to enter into the question which lies at the root of them all ; that is, the question of the constitution of the Church, as established by our Lord, and the authority given to it by Him.

We cannot possibly find out which is the true Church, until we have considered what that Church must be like, and how it must be constituted. When this is settled all other points of difference can soon be disposed of, but until we come to some understanding on this question we cannot possibly get any nearer. It seems a waste of time to discuss, at length, a hundred points of theology and history, whilst we leave this fundamental question unsettled.

The question of the Church, therefore, is the one essential controversy of the day with all those earnest people whose feelings are leading them in the direction of the Catholic Church, but it has, in reality, a much wider significance.

At the present day, all Protestants, both in the Established Church and outside of it, are beginning to realize that, without a living teaching authority on earth, there can be no such thing as a distinct and clear religious teaching. How can any dogmatic religion rest on the discordant and perpetually shifting ground of private judgment ? In the nature of things men will differ in religious opinions, and no one can decide who is right and who is wrong except a divinely-appointed authority. Nothing can more clearly show the hopelessness of any human tribunal in face of

such questions than the present dissensions of the Church of England. Here you have two great parties holding absolutely different views on the most sacred subjects, and no one to decide. The bishops, evidently, dare not give any decision, and the legislature is apparently in much the same condition.

How can any one decide, by his own unassisted judgment amongst a multitude of conflicting opinions? or, at any rate, how can he have the least rational confidence in the correctness of his judgment, when so many equally competent people take an entirely different view?

If God has left no authority on earth to teach us, we *must* judge for ourselves. We cannot reasonably, or conscientiously, follow *any* human guidance, since, in such matters, mere learning is no guarantee of truth, and therefore we have nothing to rest upon but our own reason, however much we may distrust it.

The result of this is that almost everywhere, outside the Catholic Church, Christianity is losing its dogmatic character, and ceasing to be a distinct religious teaching. It is assuming by degrees the position of a rather uncertain system of morality, which each one may interpret after his own fashion.

It is not at all wonderful that Christianity should thus lose its character as a Divine revelation amongst those who reject the Church. Our Lord meant His Church to be the "pillar and ground of the truth," so, naturally, to those who reject His Church, Christianity appears to be without sufficient foundation. Our Lord meant men to learn from the teaching of His Church—and if they will not hear the Church, it is not surprising that they never learn at all.



To all, therefore, High Church and Low Church, Church of England or Dissenters, who are not content with vague morality, but want a voice from heaven, and truths distinctly revealed by God—to all these, the question of Church authority is the most vital of all questions, because it is clear that, in the long run, no religious creed, and no dogmatic teaching of any kind, can be maintained without some divinely-appointed Teacher.

Naturally, therefore, we hear of the Church and Church authority in every direction.

Now, however, comes the difficulty: "What *is* the Church?" "What do you mean by the Church?" "What qualities and attributes do you suppose it to have?" "What authority do you consider to have been given to it by Almighty God?"

If we have not come to any understanding on these points, we may argue for ever without arriving at a conclusion. I am talking about one thing, when I speak of the Church—you, perhaps, mean something entirely different, so the discussion is a waste of time. This is so obviously the case, that you would have supposed that every one entering upon the controversy would, at any rate, have made up his own mind as to these preliminary questions. The "Anglican" party in the Church of England, in particular, ought to feel the necessity of having some precise definition of "the Church" according to their notions. It cannot, I think, be denied that these excellent people are using the word "Church" in a very novel sense. All mankind are familiar with the idea of the "Catholic Church," or the "Church of England," or the "Russian Church"—but when you come to talk of the "Church" in

a sense distinct from these ;—to mean “that large body extending through East and West, and worshipping God in all languages ;” or, as Cardinal Newman, in his Protestant days, puts it : “Neither the Latin, nor the Greek, nor the English, taken by itself, but of the whole Church, as one body ; of Italy as one with England ; of the Saxon or Norman as one with the Caroline Church” \*—when you speak of the Church in this way, surely we have a right to ask, What you mean by a Church? Whom do you include? Whom do you exclude?

If the Anglican party are not prepared to answer these questions, all they say about the Church must be meaningless, and all discussion idle talk.

It is precisely this definition which we cannot get ; no one of the Anglican party will say whom he includes in the Church, or whom he excludes, or what he considers to be the essential qualification of membership.

It cannot be for want of time—for this school of thought has been flourishing for nearly seventy years, so that it has seen two or more generations of clergy ; it certainly is not because they have never been asked to explain their position, for they have been challenged again and again to do so. Until we have settled these questions, we cannot possibly unravel the difficulties which divide us, and, therefore, I am anxious to discuss the preliminaries which are, in fact, at the very foundation of all religious belief.

Dr. Mahan says the Romanists “narrow down the Church to Communion with the Roman See.” Certainly ; but we want to know to what *he* “narrows it down” ! It is plain he must narrow it down to *something*, if the word is to

\* “Apologia”—Appendix, p. 12.



have any meaning. The very term "definition" means narrowing down: pointing out the boundaries beyond which it does not extend; and we cannot get any further till we know the precise definition on "narrowing down" our opponents would suggest.

Now, I think we are all agreed that the Church must be a body: "One body and one spirit," says the Apostle. Let us then consider what we mean by a "body." It is clear that we may use the term in many distinct senses. We may speak of an organized or an unorganized body. In one sense, we may say that a heap of sand is a body, or a lump of chalk, since they make one mass together. In such a body there is no relation between any two parts; it is quite an accident that they are together, and division would not substantially alter their condition.

For instance, you can divide a heap of sand into three or four parts, and then shovel them together into one heap, and by so doing, you make no difference whatever in the condition of the original grains.

Again, by a body, you may mean an organized body. Now you have an entirely different state of things. Every part of such a body is intimately connected by its organization with every other part. There is a perpetual communion or interdependence between the parts, by virtue of which the whole becomes, morally, one being, instead of a number of independent atoms.

Moreover, if it is a living being, it must have some principle of corporate action, as one body, and this obviously implies some centre of authority. If there is no such centre, it is plain that each portion will go its own way, and there can be no action as a body.

Its motion, moreover, must be from within, not from outside. A heap of sand has just the motion it receives from the shovel and no more, but a living and organized body must have some power of action independently of any external force.

Now, I should like to ask our friends, in what sense do you consider the Church to be a body? Is it a body as a heap of sand may be called a body? or is it an organized body?

I don't think many people would adopt the first suggestion; though, indeed, the talk about "branch churches," "corporate re-union," and so forth, is very suggestive of it.

With a shovel you can easily make your heap of sand into three heaps, and just as easily make it one again. You cannot do this, however, with any living organized body. You cannot cut up an animal and make it into three, nor can you take two living creatures and make them into one. The moment a living creature is divided, one part or other ceases to live; both parts, indeed, *may* die, but the life that before animated the body cannot be divided.

Such expressions as "branch churches," etc., can only be used by those who have failed to realise what is meant by a living organized body. Nothing can be really united to a living body, except by being absorbed, particle by particle, into its substance; so, if the Church has any real analogy with a living body, she can only admit individuals, and not bodies of men. A nation may enter the Church, but, however numerous, they must come as individuals, and a corporate union is an impossibility. A great number may, indeed, agree to enter the Church together, but, in so

doing, they manifestly give up the idea of being a separate body, and become members of the Church as individuals.

Supposing, however, for a moment, that we are to say that the Church is a body, merely as we might call a heap of sand a body—what are we to say of it? I should think we must say that it is not worth talking of at all. In that case, it does not seem to matter whether there is a Church or not. Such a Church can do nothing for us, and we can have no duties towards it. We may, indeed, have duties to the elements composing it, but to the body, if body it can be called, we have none.

What I have said about unorganized bodies, applies nearly, or quite as much, to bodies of that inferior organization, which we find in vegetables. Trees and plants in general may, in a sense, be called organized bodies, but their organization is of an entirely different type from that of the animal kingdom. They possess no consciousness, and no power of determination; they have no will, and their action is simple, the result of mechanical laws. You can plant a slip of a tree and it grows, but, by doing so, you are not dividing the concentrated life of the plant, because there is no such life; the vitality, such as it is, is to be found distributed through the whole structure.

It may be said that our Lord expressly compared His Church to a tree—"and the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof." I think, however, that this comparison merely relates to the external appearance of the Church; that it is a great and conspicuous and growing body, able to give shelter to all men, as the tree affords the protection of its branches to the birds of the air. It cannot, indeed, be considered as representing her internal consti-



tution, in virtue of which she guides, controls, and supports her children. It is clear that a tree does none of these things by the birds that dwell in its branches: it merely gives them a passive shelter, and has no tendency to form them into one family.

The same external view of the Church is taken when it is compared to a net enclosing a multitude of fishes; and also when it is compared to a fold—that is, if we look upon the fold merely as the external barrier by which the sheep are surrounded.

It seems very clear that when we look upon the Church not merely as an external, visible body, but as a society of men intended to influence mankind, we must look for a very different kind of organization.

A body having neither consciousness, nor power of action, nor organs of speech, cannot possibly perform the functions for which our Lord established His Church, and, for all practical purposes, might just as well not exist.

All those, then, who believe that Christ left a Church on earth to do a work amongst men—that is, to be His witness to all mankind, and a teacher and guide to Christians—must, I think, discard this lower kind of organization as something not worth disputing about.

The first thing, then, that we have to do, is to consider in what sense we call the Church a body: that is, to make up our minds whether, by the term, we mean a living organized body, or merely a collection of particles thrown together, without any bond of union or relation to a common centre, or power of united action.

Let us dismiss this last alternative as not worth discussing, and consider what must be the characteristics

of any collection of men which can reasonably be called a living, or a "corporate body." Such an assemblage of men must, in some way, have a sufficient analogy to the living beings we see around us to warrant the use of the figure of speech.

Now, what are the essential conditions of a living body? Clearly, the first essential of any description of "body" is that it should have distinct limits. No one ever heard of a "body" of any kind which had not a definite boundary, so that it could be clearly said what belonged to it, and what did not. This is true of everything that can be called a body in any sense, but is most emphatically and obviously true of every *living* body, so that the idea of a living body with uncertain, undefined limits is almost an absurdity.

It is plain that a collection of men *without* any such distinct limits cannot in any reasonable sense be called a body. This characteristic is shown in all collections of men which are usually called bodies—for instance, a city corporation, a university, an army, and so forth; all of these have distinct boundaries. A man must either be a member or *not* a member of such a body, and the conditions of membership are well known.

Now in the Catholic Church there is no difficulty about this. Everybody knows what is required to make a man a member of it, and how he ceases to belong to it. But what are the limits of the Church according to the views of Anglicans? How do you propose to define that "large body extending through East and West?" That is what we cannot so well answer.

If it is necessary that the Church should have clearly defined limits because that is in the very essence of a living



body, this necessity is made more clear by all that is said of it in Holy Scripture. The Prophet Micheas says : "It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the top of mountains, and high above the hills, and people shall flow to it" (Mich. iv. 1). I suppose all Christians would agree that this refers to the Church our Lord was to establish, and what is the quality about it which is most dwelt upon? Its conspicuousness—on the top of mountains. It is something evident to all mankind which no one can mistake. There is to be no difficulty in telling where it is or what it is—no indefiniteness about it.

So, again, with the still more striking prophecy of Daniel. When the Prophet has described the great statue which the king had seen in his dream, and has given the interpretation of the dream, he concludes with these words : "But in the days of those kingdoms the God of Heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and His kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people, and it shall break in pieces, and shall consume all those kingdoms, and itself shall stand for ever" (Dan. ii. 44). Here, again, the one particular quality of the kingdom is that it is to be visible and conspicuous to all mankind.

Now let us see what our Lord Himself says of the Church which He is to establish. He describes it by a number of figures which correspond most accurately with the idea given us by prophecy. He tells us that it is to be like a great tree—all the birds of the air are to take refuge in it. "The Kingdom of Heaven," He says, "is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which is the least indeed of all seeds, but when it is

grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof" (St. Matt. xiii. 31, 32). Can we find any figure which better expresses the visible, tangible character of the Church?

So of His other figures: The Kingdom of Heaven is like a net cast into the sea, enclosing a vast multitude of fishes, good and bad. The one special idea contained in this figure is that of a clearly marked boundary between those who are *within* and those who are *without*. It does not follow that all who are within are good, but they are distinctly marked off from all who are without.

This remark is equally true of the most striking of all His figures—that of the fold. A "fold" is nothing if it has not boundaries. If the sheep cannot see quite clearly where the boundaries are, it cannot be called a fold, because it is plain that invisible, intangible boundaries are of no possible use.

It is clear, moreover, from our Lord's words that these boundaries are not dependent on the dispositions of those within or without, because He distinctly speaks of those who are His sheep, and yet, for the time, are without the fold. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, these I must bring, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." The proper and natural place for the sheep is within the fold, but they may accidentally be without it; that, however, does not make the place in which, for the moment, they are, the fold of Christ.

It is obvious, then, that a clear, tangible, external line of demarcation is an essential condition of the Church; it is so, because you cannot imagine any living body without

such an exact definition, and because it is specially pointed out in Holy Scripture as one most marked characteristic of the Church which our Lord was to establish.

An external limit and definition is essential to anything that can be called a body in any sense, but to be a living body something more is required; it must be organized. The great characteristic of everything possessing life is that its parts should be arranged with a dependence one on another. A mass of stone, as I have before said, is a mere aggregation of particles quite independent of each other; it may be great or it may be small; but that is a mere accident, and it makes no difference to each part whether the mass is increased or diminished.

With a living body it is different. From the highest to the lowest, each living body is made up of parts which share the life of the whole, and in their turn, minister to the wants of the whole. It has *organs* of some kind, simple or complicated: that is, it is *organized*.

The Church, therefore, if it is to have any claim to be called a living body, must be organized in some way, and this organization must be made subservient to the spirit or life which is in it. What we read in the Holy Scripture about the establishment of the Church fully bears out what we should antecedently expect; it is not only a body with distinct tangible limits, but with a very distinct organization. In the first place, it is to have a life intimately connected with its exterior organization, as every living body has. No words can express this idea more plainly than St. Paul's words, "One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv. 4). Here the body and the spirit are correlative



—there must be one body as, and because, there is one spirit.

Such a body cannot exist as a living thing without an interdependence and subordination of parts. Here, again, St. Paul instructs us : “There are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord ; and there are diversities of operations, but the same God, Who worketh all in all. To one, indeed, by the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom : and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit . . . but all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members ; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free : and in one spirit we have all been made to drink. For the body also is not one member, but many . . . and if they all were one member, where would be the body ? But now there are many members indeed, yet one body” (1 Cor. xii. 5). Here the Apostle goes on, over and over again, repeating that the Church must be one body, and that this body must be made up of a number of members dependent one on another, and united in one spirit.

Again, the Church is described to us as under one authority, to which reference must always be made. However far the Church extended, it was always to look back to that central authority. Our Lord says : “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church”—and St. Paul speaks of it as “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building, being framed together,



groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together into a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 20); and he also tells us who are "*the pillars*" on which the edifice rests. He says: "And when they had known the grace that was given to me, James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave to me the right hand of fellowship" (Gal. ii. 9). Now, all these texts plainly describe the Church of Christ as a carefully constructed, living temple—with a foundation on which to rest, with pillars for its support, and all other parts necessary to grow up into a "holy temple of the Lord." If it is to be spoken of as a living body, then it is clear that these figures of speech can only mean that it is one carefully organized for the purpose for which it was created.

Now let us see the steps by which this organization was carried out. To begin with—even before the coming down of the Holy Ghost the apostles thought it necessary to fill up their number. They prayed: "Thou, O Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these two Thou hast chosen to take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas, by transgression, hath fallen" (Acts i. 24). Why should they have done this if the Church had not received an organization from God which was to be continued? They chose St. Matthias to share with them the powers and authority they had received from the Lord. It is clear, therefore, that these powers were to be handed on—and that they had power to give to others the fulness of what they had received.

The next step of the apostles showed that they were commissioned not only to hand on this power in its fulness, but also to give it *partially* as might be necessary—that is,

not only to make apostles, but to give to others "diversities of ministries." They had authority to bestow upon others such portions of their power as might be necessary for a more complete organization of the whole. The seven deacons were chosen, and "these they set before the apostles: and they, praying, imposed hands upon them" (Acts vi. 6).

These deacons were chosen immediately to look after temporal matters—the daily ministration of alms, and so forth—but it is clear that the office they had received involved also a share in the spiritual ministry. St. Stephen took a prominent part in preaching the Gospel, and was the first martyr—and, after his death, St. Philip was not only distinguished as a preacher of the Word, but went through Samaria working miracles and administering baptism. They possessed a share of the apostolic authority, but only a share. When "the apostles at Jerusalem had heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts viii. 14). St. Philip had a commission to preach and baptize—but not the power of the imposition of hands. That power had been so far reserved for the apostles.

Then, in due order, comes the time when the Church has to be spread about in countries beyond the reach of the apostles—so that, in order to provide for the wants of the faithful, the full power of the apostles must be entrusted to other hands. "And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereto I have taken them.

Then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away" (Acts xiii. 2).

St. Paul and St. Barnabas evidently went on their mission with the full apostolic power: not only preaching, but imposing hands—and "ordaining priests in every Church." St. Paul had received a special commission from our Lord, and a special revelation of the Gospel—but, nevertheless, he had the apostolic authority through the ordinary channel—by "prayer and by the imposition of hands." When we read of his miraculous conversion, and hear our Lord's voice speaking to him, calling him from on high, we might also suppose that he would need no sacraments or teaching that man could confer—but not so: he is at once commanded "to arise and go into the city"—there to be instructed and baptized as were all other Christians.

We see, therefore, the organization of the Church sketched out at its very beginning—there were to be the central pillars—there were to be the local ruling authorities, ordained in each Church, and there were to be those appointed to the "diversities of ministries" which the wants of the Church call for.

Now let us look at the Church in action—still as it is shown in the Holy Scriptures. St. Paul assembles together the "ancients" of the Church of Ephesus, and tells them what is their duty. "Take heed," he says, "to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own Blood"—they are appointed by God to rule—and their power is from Him. How are they to rule? When are they to rule? What is the reason of this power granted to them? It is "because I know

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that after my departure ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock, and of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things " (Acts xx. 28).

These words give us a good idea of the reality and energy of the ruling power appointed in each place in the early Church. Scarcely was it formed than it became a highly organized body. If we would see this further illustrated, we have only to turn to the directions the same apostle gives to his disciples, St. Timothy and St. Titus. "I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the living and the dead, by His coming and Kingdom: preach the Word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine." "Stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands."

"Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity" (St. Paul to Timothy). "To Titus my beloved son . . . for this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee" (Titus i. 4). Here we see very clearly the sort of authority which St. Paul had entrusted to his disciples—and that with it, he had given them the power to confer on others, by the imposition of hands, the gifts they themselves had received.

But now we come to another part of the Church's organization. It was not enough that the *parts* of the Church should be organized—but they must be united by a central organization. If this did not exist, there would



be no analogy with a living body. A body is alive, not because each part is alive, but because these living parts are united into a living whole by a central authority. In the Holy Scripture, we, of course, see the Church in a very rudimentary state, but still, the life and unity of the whole body is put before us as plainly as the organization of the separate parts.

A question arose at Antioch—the very important question as to what was to be the condition of the Gentiles converted to the Christian faith; and “they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of the other side, should go up to the apostles and priests to Jerusalem about this question.” When the discussion was finished, “then it pleased the apostles and ancients, with the whole Church, to choose men of their own company, and to send to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas, who was surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren, writing by their hands. The apostles and ancients brethren, to the brethren of the Gentiles that are in Antioch, and in Syria, and Cilicia: Greeting—. . . It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things” (Acts xv. 22).

“Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:” the decree was addressed to nearly the whole of the then existing Church. “To lay no further burden;” no counsel or brotherly advice to an independent body, but a distinct central authority having a right to lay burdens as might be necessary, on the whole body. “To the Holy Ghost and to us:” an authority not the outcome of an agreement amongst men, but a Divine authority coming from on high. It is not, moreover, an

authority claimed by apostles because they, as individuals, had received it from our Lord: it is "the apostles and ancients brethren," that is the lawfully constituted, central authority, which claims to speak in this commanding way.

We have, then, in the Holy Scripture, a very complete picture of the Church's organization—the existence of many powers and faculties, all co-operating for the good of the whole—the organization of each individual member, and the still higher organization of many members into one body.

Every living being has some organization, and, moreover, this organization is constant and unchanging: not in the sense that it does not undergo modifications and alterations, corresponding with the growth of the individual, but in the sense that the organization never comes to an end, to be superseded by something quite new. Even in those living beings which undergo the most remarkable apparent changes, such as we see in the insect creation, all these changes are brought about by orderly and intelligible growth, so that, however different they may seem, one form is plainly the development of the other. If this is so, even in the meanest things in creation—much more will it be true of a Church which is the special work of God, which our Lord deigned to call His own body, His own members on earth. If the Church was established on earth by His apostles with a distinct organization, it clearly will have that now. The organization may, indeed, have altered in detail, but it will be substantially the same—so that we shall be able to see that what existed at the beginning still remains, though perhaps in a modified or developed shape.

Now comes another consideration: the organization of each living creature is its *own*, and is suited to what that

creature has to do. Every creature, from the smallest insect—the most minute sponge or jelly found in the sea—to the greatest and most perfect on earth, each one is found to be fitted with an organization corresponding to the place it is to fill, and the object for which it is made. If, then, you want to understand the organization of any living being, you must obviously take into consideration the work for which it is intended. It is quite certain that the organisation with which it is supplied will be such as to enable it to carry out that work, whatever it may be.

Let us apply this consideration to the Church of God. This Church was founded by our Lord to be His own Body upon earth, and was, as St. Paul tells us, “purchased with His own Blood” (Acts xx. 28). It was especially dear to Him, and He had “delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the Word of Life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. v. 27).

Can we suppose such a Church to have been established with less organization, with less provision for its wants, than that bestowed on the least of God’s creatures? “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? . . . Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows” (St Luke xii. 6, 7). Can we imagine that God gave to the least of His creatures an organization perfectly suited to their wants and the work they had to perform in the world, but that He left His Church without any such provision!

What was the object for which this great Church was



established? It was to be a "kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1 St. Peter ii. 9). It was to be "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15). It certainly had then some special work to do on earth, and if we consider what this work was, we shall be better able to understand what is told us about its organization.

Our Lord says, as His last commission to His Church : "You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." Here, then, was the work given to them to do : "to be witnesses." It certainly was not a personal commission to the apostles as individuals. It is clear that as individuals they could not be witnesses to the "uttermost part of the earth," unless they were to be immortal. Such a work could only be entrusted to a body which was to exist upon the earth for ages—and could, therefore, only be undertaken by a "corporate body"—by a body of men so organized as to be a living body, which, though composed of mortal men, is itself *immortal*, that is, capable of existence till the end of the world.

This was the great work of the Church—to be witnesses to our Lord, and it was an *essential* work. As far as we can see, some such witness was absolutely needed to carry out the work for which our Lord came on earth. If He had not provided some witness of this sort, according to all human calculation, the world at large could never have known of Him, or His work, or the redemption He had brought to His people : and, to a great extent, at any rate, His works would have been done in vain. Even the little knowledge of Him which men might have



received at the time, would very soon have died out, or become utterly corrupt, if no special means had been appointed for keeping it before the minds of the men in its integrity.

Of course I do not mean to say that Almighty God might not have made use of other means for giving to mankind a knowledge of the work of redemption, and keeping this knowledge incorrupt during ages, but we do not find a trace of any other plan. It is plain that the Holy Scripture could not accomplish this work, because Holy Scripture could never have been brought to the knowledge of men without some living authority to vouch for its authenticity, and to explain its meaning. As a matter of fact, we know that the writings of the New Testament were never even collected into one book for some centuries after our Lord's time.

We may safely assume then that the great work for which the Church was established was to be a witness to men of our Lord's revelation. But a witness is of two kinds, a witness to an unbelieving world without, and a witness, in another sense, to believers. To those within, a witness means a *teacher*, one who is commissioned, not only to announce the great fact that a Redeemer has come, but to explain the details of the message that the Redeemer came to bring, and to show the means by which each individual soul was to be made partaker of His redemption. Our Lord therefore sends His apostles, and those who share their office, not only as witness, but as teachers: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you ; and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world " (St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

But our Lord's teaching was not mere teaching. It was not a school of philosophy, but a discipline and a power : "For He was teaching them as One having power, and not as the scribes " (St. Mark i. 22). This same power He made over to His apostles : "All power is given to Me in Heaven and upon earth ;" and "as the Father hath sent Me, I also send you " (St. John xx. 21). "Be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine " (2 Tim. iv. 2). "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in faith " (Titus i. 13). This is not mere teaching, it is ruling, enforcing, commanding. It is plain, therefore, that the office for which the Church was appointed was threefold. It was to be a *witness* to the world, a *teacher* to Christians, and not only a teacher but a *ruler*, having authority to enforce teaching and carry out discipline.

I began by saying that there was no good in discussing the authority of the Church, or inquiring which was the true Church of Christ, unless we came to a clear agreement as to what we mean by a "Church." I have been therefore trying to bring out as clearly as possible what is the Catholic idea of a Church. It is a corporate body, made up of mortal men indeed, but having a permanent life of its own ; destined by Divine appointment to continue till the "consummation of the world." To carry out this idea it must have the characteristics which are necessary to give it an analogy with a living body, and these characteristics are :

1. Distinct limits, that is to say, distinct and well-defined conditions of membership.

2. An organisation of some sort, and an organization which essentially belongs to it, and which it can never lose, though it may, and, indeed, must be developed and modified as time goes on and circumstances change.

3. That this organization must be of such a nature as to enable it to perform, at all times, the object for which it was established, which object is threefold ; to be a witness to the world at large, to be a teacher, and a ruler, or one with authority to enforce teaching as well as to teach.

Now what we want to know is this : Do Anglicans mean the same thing when they speak of the Church? or do they mean something different? and, if so, *what* do they mean? Until we have compared our idea of the Church with them, we can get no nearer. If they mean the same thing, then we want to know : What, according to them, are the boundaries of the Church?

This is a question to which we cannot get any answer. People speak, as I have before said, of the Church as "that large body extending through East and West, and worshipping God in all languages," but they do not attempt to say who belongs to this great body, and who does not, or what are the conditions for being a member of it, and as far as I know, Anglicans have not as yet attempted any such definition.

For instance, would the Anglican party venture to say that all baptized persons are members of the Church, whatever they believe? Catholics believe that they are members of the Church, in the sense that they *ought* to belong to it in a special way, because their baptism has made them



subject to the authority of the Church, but if they choose to break off from her communion they can do so. Do Ritualists consider that they belong to it whether they will or no? I suppose the great bulk of Dissenters are baptized;—do Anglicans consider them members of the Church? Again, some who have been baptized are found to have given up all belief in religion. Can Anglicans possibly believe them to continue members of Christ's Church in spite of their avowed unbelief? It seems impossible that any one should consider the mere fact of having once been lawfully baptized as sufficient to make a man a member of Christ's Church. Is it possible to believe that such a collection of people differing widely in religious opinions can constitute a spiritual body of any sort?

But if baptism alone does not make members of the Church, what boundary can they assign? It is enough to accept the formula of the Apostles' Creed? I suppose nearly all heretics profess to do that. Will the Nicene Creed answer the purpose better? This Creed, too, I suppose, is generally accepted in some sense or other by most people, and certainly is consistent with a great proportion of the existing heresies. Then if you come to decrees of councils where can you logically stop? Is it the first four? or the first six that you admit? and if so, why do you draw the line there? In fact, have those who speak of the Church in this general sense agreed on *any* such line?

If the boundaries of the Church are not marked by any such formulas, can they become any better by the recognition of authority? I am afraid that only makes the case worse. The recognition of the lawful jurisdiction and valid orders of the bishops of the Anglican Church cannot be a



necessary condition, for that would cut off all the Roman Church, and apparently all the Greek Church also; at least I have never heard that the Greeks acknowledged the orders of the English Church any more than the Roman Church does. According to Anglicans, it certainly is not obedience to the See of Rome, for then they themselves are excluded. So it comes to this, that we can find *no* limits or boundaries whatever to suit their theory, and the Church becomes a heterogeneous collection of undefined elements, which cannot be said, in any reasonable sense, to constitute a corporate body.

Dr Mahan speaks of the Church of England having "a noble disdain of mere verbal consistency;" but it is clear that to be a visible Church, the points of agreement must be external and *capable* of being expressed in words, and that no amount of internal agreement, if such a thing were possible, would make an external Church; moreover, if "mere verbal consistency" is a difficult thing, a *real* consistency is a much harder one. It is comparatively easy to get men to agree to a form of words, if they are allowed to make them bend a little, but the real difficulty is when not only the form of words is proposed, but the meaning of those words is rigidly defined.

If Anglicans cannot even get an external symbol of any kind of union amongst that body, of which they would make up the Church of God, how very far must they be from anything like *real* union.

If, according to the Anglican theory, it is difficult or impossible to imagine any definite limit to the Church, it seems harder still to find anything in the shape of organization. I don't think any one would venture to say that in

this "large body extending through East and West," there is any organization whatever. Has it any head? Has it any organs? Is there any transmission of orders from a central authority? Is there any common feeling as member of the same body? I am sure no one would venture to say that there was anything of the sort.

If there were any sort of organization, it might perhaps be said that it was a development or modification of the original organization given to it by our Lord, but there is *none*, and this seems to me to be fatal to the idea that the "large body" of which we are speaking, can in any reasonable sense be called a corporate body.

But there seems to be a prevalent idea that each diocese is distinct in itself; that each bishop in his own diocese has full authority from our Lord to rule and teach without having (necessarily) any connection with any other. They would say, it seems: "Certainly there must be some organization, or the Church would be merely a collection of individuals, and not a body; but then it is quite enough *essentially* that each individual part should be organized. This is the model that we find in the Holy Scriptures, where each bishopric is spoken of as a Church in itself; for instance, 'to the Angel of the Church of Ephesus' (Apoc. ii. 1), and this view is borne out by strong passages from the Fathers.

"No doubt it would be desirable that there should be intercommunion and alliance between these different parts, but that is not essential: the one thing *necessary* is that each part should be organized under its own bishop, and that, and that alone, is the organization appointed by Christ."

I cannot do better than make a quotation from Cardinal Newman on this subject. It is rather a long one, but it is taken from one of his latest works, and is not so generally known, I think, as it deserves to be.

In his "Essays, Critical and Historical," which is a republication of some of his Anglican writings, with notes explaining them from a Catholic point of view, published in 1872, he says: "This church, this spiritually endowed body, this minister of the sacraments, teacher of Gospel truth, possessor of that power of binding and loosing, commonly called the power of the keys; is this Divine creation coincident, as Catholics hold, with the whole extended body of Christians everywhere, so as to be in its essence one, and only one, organized association—or, on the other hand, as insisted on in the above Essay, is every separate bishopric, every diocesan unit, of which that whole is composed, properly and primarily the Church which has the promises, each of them being like a crystallization, only a repetition of the rest, each of them in point of privileges as much the perfect Church as all together, each equal to each, each independent of each, each invested with full spiritual powers, *in solidum*, as St. Cyprian speaks, none subject to any, none bound to union with other by any law of its being or condition of its prerogatives, but all free from all, except as regards the duty of mutual love, and only called one Church, when taken in the aggregate or in its Catholicity, though real multiform, by a conversational misnomer, or figure of speech, or abstraction of the mind, as when all men, viewed as one, are called 'man'?" . . .

"Now it is very intelligible to deny that there is any



divinely established, divinely commissioned Church at all ; but to hold that the one Church is realized and perfected in each of a thousand independent corporate units, co-ordinate, bound by no necessary intercommunion, adjusted into no Divine organized whole, is a tenet, not merely unknown to Scripture, but so plainly impossible to carry out practically, as to make it clear that it never would have been devised, except by men who, conscientiously believing in a visible Church, and also conscientiously opposed to Rome, had nothing left for them, whether they would or would not, but to entrench themselves in the paradox, that the Church was One indeed, and the Church was Catholic indeed, but that the One Church was not the Catholic, and the Catholic Church was not the One.

“First, as to the scriptural view of the subject. That the writers of the New Testament speak of many local Christian bodies, called Churches, is indisputable ; but the question is whether these various local bodies, so-called, were, or were not, brought together by Divine command into a higher unity than any local association, and into a union rendered imperative by the special privileges attached to its observance ; whether by the word ‘Church’ was not properly and really denoted, not any local body, but one and only one large association extending as widely as the Christian name, including in it all merely local bodies, having one organization, a necessary intercommunion, fixed mutual relations between its portions, and supernatural powers and gifts lodged primarily in it, the association itself, and thence communicated, by aggregation and incorporation, to each subdivision and each individual member of it. This latter view is the teaching of Scripture,



that is, in the lifetime of the apostles, according to the Scripture record, the Church of the promises, the Church of Christ, was a *body* (1) *visible*; (2) *one*; (3) *Catholic*, and (4) *organized*."

The Cardinal proceeds at some length to produce Scripture proofs on these points, and then continues: "If, then, the New Testament is to be our guide in matters ecclesiastical, one thing at least is certain. We may doubt whether bishops are of obligation, whether there is an apostolical succession, whether presbyters are priests, whether St. Stephen and his six associates were the first deacons, whether the sacraments are seven or two; but of one thing we cannot doubt, that all Christians were in that first age bound together in one body, with an actual inter-communion and mutual relations between them, with ranks and offices, and with a central authority; and that this organized association was the 'Body of Christ,' and that in it, considered as one, dwelt the 'One Spirit.' This external union is a duty prior in order and idea to Episcopacy; in it, and not in Episcopacy, lies the transmission and warrant of Divine privilege. It is emphatically a *sacramentum unitatis*, and is pre-supposed, typified, required by the Sacraments properly so-called; and divines who substitute a diocese for the *orbis terrarum* as the first rudiment of the Church, must in consistency be prepared to answer those who, going a little farther, substitute a congregation for a diocese; for Episcopalians are only one species of Independents with far less to say for themselves from Scripture.

"Secondly, this theory is as impracticable, as an ecclesiastical system, as it is unknown to Scripture. Not

only has it never worked, but it has never been fairly attempted, or even imagined, at least for any length of time or on a large scale. Regarded in its probable results and actual tendencies, it is a sure and easy way of not effecting those very ends which ecclesiastical arrangements are intended to subserve. The first idea of the Gospel is revelation, that is, right faith, certain knowledge, truth and light; the first precept of the new law is charity, that is, mutual goodwill, brotherly love, peace. Now if our Lord had intended to promote, not these merciful ends, but ignorance, confusion, unbelief, discord, strife, enmity, mutual alienation, could He have provided a better way than that of ordaining, by express command, and sanctioning, by supernatural privilege, a thousand or two local episcopates, all over the earth, each sovereign, each independent of the rest? Of course it might be His will to manifest His overruling might amid human pride, passion, and selfishness, and to work by miracle; nor again do I deny that history tells us of great abuses and disorders in religious matters arising out of despotic power, and the indignant reaction of the oppressed. Certainly there is no form of polity which is safe from the inroads of human infirmity and sin; but at the same time there are some forms which can withstand or present these evils better than others; the present British Constitution, for instance, is more conducive to peace, internal and external, than was the heptarchy, nor should we be so happy in temporal respects as we are, were each of our cities a sovereign state, as some are just now scheming to bring about in France; but if there be any polity, ecclesiastical or civil, which has proved itself above others

a working system, strong, coherent, enduring, and full of resource, surely it is the world-wide ecclesiastical power which alone, among forms of Christianity, has ever preserved and carried on that unity in Catholicity which we see initiated in Scripture. Natural gifts and virtues, statesman-like principles, sagacious policy, have found large room for their development in that organization which inspired apostles commenced; it alone, as Protestant writers have confessed, has carried civilization and Christianity across the gulf which separates the old world from the modern; and while it is only a matter of opinion whether it has on any important subject added to the faith once delivered, it has, beyond all questions, and in matter-of-fact, answered the ends of its institution, in preserving to us every page of inspired Scripture, every doctrine of the Primitive Church, a host of immemorial rites and traditions, and the voluminous writings of the ancient fathers. This has been the result of ecclesiastical unity.

“On the other hand, as to the Anglican theory: How is it even to be put upon the course? How is it to start? How are we to find for it life and strength enough even to allow of its attempting and breaking down? It has an initial difficulty before it comes into the region of fact; its necessary Church unit is diocesan; what is diocesan is local; what is local must have boundaries; boundaries do not come by nature, but by positive enactment; who is to draw them? Suppose two neighbouring bishops draw lines intersecting each other, who is to enforce a settlement between them? Suppose each of them thinks that the two dioceses naturally form but one diocese, then we have altar set up

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against altar. And further, who is to map out a whole province? Is it not very plain that the civil power must come in from the first, either as guiding or compelling an arrangement? Thus from the first, Episcopal autonomy is close upon Erastianism.

“But there may be councils held, laws passed, oaths taken, and a central authority created, of course; but that authority is after all human and conventional; how is it a match for that Episcopal *magisterium* which on the hypothesis is Divine! Each bishop has the power of the keys; each can bind and loose; each can excommunicate all his brethren; each can proclaim and defend a heresy. What, then, can keep them in the unity of the faith, but to suppose each of them alike infallible? Yet must a theory, which protests against one infallibility, fall back upon a thousand? Would Christianity, as regards truth and peace, faith and charity, fare worse, would it not fare better without any Church at all, than with a thousand churches scattered through the world, all supreme and independent?” —“Essays Critical and Historical,” vol. ii., p. 90.

It does not seem necessary to add much to what the Cardinal says so eloquently and conclusively. It would be difficult to imagine any theory in more striking opposition to all that is told us in Holy Scripture. “A city seated on a mountain,” “a tree such that the birds of the air dwell in the branches thereof”—to be represented by a thousand little communities essentially unconnected; “one body and one spirit,” by a thousand corporate bodies, each animated by its own individual spirit; “one fold and one shepherd,” to mean a multitude of folds, each with its own enclosure, and its own appointed shepherd, independent of every



authority on earth! It would be difficult to find a more glaring contradiction.

How would it be possible to form an idea of the truth on such a system? Every heresy that ever was, has been supported by many bishops, nay, in some instances, bishops were the authors of great heresies—as in the instance of Nestorius. How could any outsider possibly tell what was really the faith of Christ? Are the subjects of each bishop to follow him wherever he goes, whatever he teaches? or are they themselves to sit in judgment upon him, considering that he and they are independent of all other authority upon earth? Truly, as the Cardinal says, if there was to be harmonious teaching, or *any* real teaching, they must all be infallible; but nothing is more obvious than that they are *not* infallible!

Again, if they are the one authority divinely appointed, they must be supreme; who has the right to judge their conduct—their own flocks, or strangers? How can they be legitimately judged? The Lord has given no authority over them, how can men presume to judge them? Such a system, moreover, as the Cardinal says, is obviously impossible in practice. I do not think it could be written down or even conceived, in detail, by any one. How could it ever begin? Was each bishop to seize a diocese for himself as large or as small as suited him? or does the theory involve that the apostles themselves should have mapped out the world into dioceses? Can any provision be made for the increase, the change, the altered wants of the people, if each diocese is a complete, divinely-appointed Church by itself, and each bishop a supreme and independent ruler?

One thing seems perfectly clear, that bishops were *never*,

in any place, or any period, of the Church's history, considered or treated as supreme and irresponsible—and, moreover, never *claimed* to be so considered: they were never considered as doctrinally supreme, but at all times, and in all places, there has been a recognized appeal to *some* external authority. The theory seems to me to be as flatly contradicted by the whole history of the Church as it is possible, in the nature of things, for any theory to be.

I would conclude this chapter by asking again: Do Anglicans propose any different idea of a Church from that given by Catholics? If so, let them consider carefully what is their *definition* of it, and not be content with generalities which may only appear possible, because the details are omitted.

If they are not able to find any other definition, let them consider whether *any* other body can be found on earth to satisfy that definition except the Church of Rome.

It is, at any rate, clear that the Roman Church has the first condition for doing the work which our Lord intended His Church to do. No one attempts to deny that she is a corporate body of the most perfect and complete kind. The conditions of membership, both external and internal, are most accurately defined. Every one, from the Pope himself to the smallest child, is bound by precisely the same formula of faith—and by the meaning which the Church has given of it; there is absolutely one faith throughout, since no one can be a Catholic who does not admit the whole of the Church's doctrine, so far as it has been defined.

There is not the smallest doubt as to the limits of this corporate body, and there is none as to her organization.

One authority reigns throughout, and is conveyed by a thousand channels to every part of the earth. Every bishop is in communion and close communication with the Holy See, and it is in virtue of this communion that he rules over his own diocese. Every priest is in communion with his bishop, and can only exercise authority over his flock in virtue of the "approbation," that is, by the consent of the bishop of the diocese.

As in the living body every part is brought into communication with the head by the nerves and circulation, so in the Church all are connected with the Holy See by the continuous chain of jurisdiction and spiritual obedience. The faithful obey their pastors, but it is not to them as individuals that obedience is shown, but to the Church in them. The bishops and priests command others because they themselves obey; they exercise spiritual power over their flocks, not on their own authority, but because their flocks have been committed to their charge, directly or indirectly, by the Supreme Pastor, to whom our Lord entrusted His sheep.

No one can deny that the Roman Church has all the characteristics of a highly organized body, and that this is not a mere passing thing. What the Church is, in these respects, she was a thousand years ago, beyond the possibility of dispute. She has shown the same qualities in fair weather, and in foul: her organization has had vitality enough to resist uninjured tempest after tempest, and to overcome difficulty after difficulty, and she is now as closely united and as completely organized as at any period of her long career.

Can it be said that there is any other religious body



on earth which can be compared with the Roman Church in the qualities which constitute a corporate body, in extent, or duration, or organization, or vitality? Further, can it be said that there is any other body, so constituted and organized as to be able to carry out through ages the work which our Lord entrusted to His Church?

It does not avail to say that there are many things in the Catholic Church which you do not like, and find a difficulty in accepting. If you are outside the Church—and for argument's sake you may be content to assume this for a moment—of course you cannot understand or appreciate the details of her doctrine and discipline. Many things must, almost of necessity, appear to you in a distorted and false light, and you cannot possibly judge of them fairly. It is, besides, the duty of the Church to guide you, and not yours to guide the Church, and the very first condition of being a member of Christ's Church is a willingness to be taught: what else does our Lord mean by saying: "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of God"?

If, then, you find yourself obliged to admit that the Roman Church, and that alone, comes to you with all the external appearance and characteristics of the Church of God, are you not self-condemned if you take on yourself to condemn her?



## CHAPTER II

### CHRIST'S WITNESS

A witness necessary—Provided in the Old Law—The Apostles witnesses—The kind required—A corporate body—Qualities—Identity—Cross-examination—Consistency — Perseverance — The Roman Church—Holy Scripture—The Church of England—Is it a witness?—The “ Branch Church ”—The Greek Church.

**E**VERY living being on earth is organized in some way, and in a way adapted to what it has to do. It has to live on the surface of the earth, in the air, or in the midst of the waters ; and it is suited for the place in which it is to dwell. The adaptation is not always the same, since every creature has its own peculiar organization ; but, however strange or unusual it may be, however a creature may differ from the other living things around it, we are sure it will be fitted for the position it has to fill. So of climate—every living creature is provided with an organization which will enable it, in a marvellous way, to endure the heat or the cold, the damp or the dry, and all the physical conditions of the life it is to lead, whatever they may be. It has a definite end to reach ; it is to live for a certain time, and to carry out the object for which it was created, and it is suited for this object. We find no mistakes. Its organization may be developed and modified, but through all changes, it will always be fitted for its work. Moreover, the higher the rank and the

greater the work given to it to do, the more complete and elaborate will be the organization with which it is furnished.

Now let us apply this analogy to the Church—God's work in a higher order. We may be quite sure that she was originally supplied with all the powers and organization necessary to carry out the end for which she was designed, whatever that was. Her organization may have developed as time went on, but we may rely upon it that she will be able to do her work until the appointed end come. If then we would understand what must be the organization of the Catholic Church, we must carefully consider the purpose for which it was established on earth. I have already tried to show that this object was to be a witness, a teacher, and a ruler and guide amongst men in the affairs of their salvation.

It is a matter of the first and most obvious necessity that there should be a witness appointed to testify to the revelation given by God—and this is the primary office of His Church. It is important to dwell on this necessity, because it brings out the necessity for a Church. Why should there be any divinely-appointed Church, people may ask. A Church, or some such institution seems to be involved in the very idea of a revelation. God has not left us without a witness, of some sort, to truth of every kind, even in things which do not specially concern us. He has given us mental faculties to enable us to deal with the natural truths around us. We can learn the truths of science by reason and experiment. In the moral world likewise we have a distinct and appropriate means of knowledge to bear witness to the truth. Con-

science is the special faculty appointed by God to bear witness to moral right and wrong, without which we could have no adequate comprehension of morality.

If then God has given to men sufficient means of knowledge in other things, is it conceivable that He should give them a special revelation of Himself, and His will, and leave them no means of accurately learning what that revelation is? Is it conceivable that the Son of God should have deigned to come down on earth to teach men, and yet have ordained no special channel by which His teaching should be communicated to the bulk of mankind?

It certainly was not so in His first revelation. He revealed Himself to men and gave them a law—but at the same time He instituted a most elaborate machinery, if I may say so, for keeping up and propagating the knowledge of Himself which He had given. The whole Jewish people was separated in a marked way from the rest of the world, and made the object of a special Providence, expressly and distinctly that it might be the means of preserving this knowledge, and the channel for communicating it, in good time, to the rest of the world. Within this people, again, a particular family was chosen, whose one work was the preservation of this knowledge, both by direct teaching and as administrators of that code of ordinance and sacrifice which was intended to keep the knowledge of God visibly before His people. “The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth: because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts” (Mal. ii. 7). Even in the time of their decay and falling off, when the end was close at hand, our Lord says: “The Scribes and



Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, all things whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do" (St. Matt. xxiii. 2).

As if this special national Providence and hereditary priesthood were not sufficient for adequately preserving the revelation He had given, Almighty God for many ages sent a succession of prophets to keep the memory of it before His people in a more perfect manner. Almost every age had its prophets, to enforce and accentuate, if I may say so, the teaching of that institution which He had appointed to watch over His revelation.

"God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoke, in times past, to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days, hath spoken to us by His Son" (Heb. i. 1): and shall there be no provision for preserving this grandest of all revelations? Will God leave it to chance whether it is remembered or forgotten? whether it is preserved pure or corrupted? No; the very idea of such a revelation implies the appointment of some special means for its preservation and continuance. When, therefore, we find our Lord, on the most solemn occasion, and in the most solemn way, bestowing upon His Apostles the character and offices of witnesses, we are not surprised, but feel that it was most natural and almost necessary for Him to do so. It was at the very moment when He was leaving them, to return to His Heavenly Kingdom, at the moment of His Ascension into Heaven, that He said, "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts i. 8).

No sooner had the Holy Spirit come upon them, than



the apostles began to act in the character of witnesses. "This Jesus hath God raised again, whereof all we are witnesses" (Acts ii. 32). "And with great power did the apostles give testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord" (Acts iv. 33); and again, "We are witnesses of all the things that He did in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem, whom they killed, hanging Him upon a tree" (Acts x. 39).

Now, if we feel assured that our Lord left some witness to Himself on earth, by which men might learn the truth concerning Him, of what character may we expect such a witness to be? I think we may take it for granted that it will be something supernatural, something with a force and guarantee which it could not get from nature alone. Almighty God does not effect great works for nothing, and we may reasonably conclude that He would not have given us a revelation if He had not intended to tell us things which we could not find out for ourselves by our natural powers. If, of ourselves, we cannot possibly discover these things, how can we understand them and carry them out in practice without supernatural help? A mere human interpreter, with nothing to guide him but the light of reason, certainly seems a most incongruous exponent of a supernatural revelation.

Moreover, this witness must be something external to ourselves. Of course it is conceivable that God should have carried out the revelation given to men in common, in an external and visible manner, by means of a special revelation given to each individual. It would, however, seem to us strange and inconsistent, and there is not a trace of any promise of such direct teaching. St. Paul

says: "How shall they believe Him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. x. 14). It was *not* God's will to teach them directly by His own inspiration, but that they should know of Him by an external witness: "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Even in his own case, though St. Paul had been miraculously called by our Lord Himself, he was at once referred to an external witness. "Go into the city, and it shall be shown you what you are to do."

Another condition must also belong to this witness: it must be able to act universally—that is to say, all over the world—and perpetually, to the end of time. We feel that the Son of God could not have come down to establish a Kingdom which was *less* than universal and perpetual. We should feel this, even if He had not told us so in the plainest of words. But He does not leave us in doubt. He says: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations . . . and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 19); and, "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Our Lord's work, therefore, was to extend over the whole world, and was to last for all time—consequently, it is clear that the witness, the interpreter of the work, must have an existence and a commission of corresponding extent and persistency.

Now, can we imagine anything on earth calculated to fulfil these conditions except such a society or corporate body as the Church? It is a corporate body, divinely endowed and guaranteed, visible to all men, and by its

constitution capable of spreading over the whole world, and of enduring to the end of the world. Of course we do not presume to say that no other plan *could* have been chosen by Divine Wisdom—but we do say that it is difficult for us to imagine any other. At any rate, there is no vestige of any other plan for providing a competent witness to be found either in Scripture or in history.

Our Lord, during His life on earth, chose out His twelve apostles, and gave to them the widest powers: "All power is given to Me in Heaven and upon earth." "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." No sooner had He ascended into Heaven, than, without a moment's hesitation, they proceeded to fill up their own number, and then to associate others with them in the ministry, and to collect "the brethren" around them into a society. Even before the coming down of the Holy Ghost they were in number "a hundred and twenty," and during the whole time described in the Acts of the Apostles they are increasing, and the process of extension and organization is going on—a corporate body or society is being formed.

What plainer indication can we possibly have of our Lord's design to establish upon earth just such a society as one would have supposed to be essential, if He would leave any "witness" of Himself to mankind? Surely all these proceedings would have been without meaning if no such permanent society was to be established on earth.

I now come to another part of my subject. If our Lord has left a witness to Himself upon earth, what must be the qualities and characteristics of this witness? What must



we look for? What have we a right to expect? Every creature must be constituted so as to be able to do the work for which it is intended : what then are the qualities which this witness must necessarily possess, if its testimony is to be of any value ?

If any one comes forward to give evidence in any court, the first thing asked of him is to give an account of himself. He must be able to say who and what he is, where he comes from, and what means he professes to have of knowing the truth about which he is to give testimony. This is required of him by friend and foe. If he cannot satisfactorily establish his identity, and explain his history, so far at least as to connect himself with the facts of which he is to speak, I do not think his evidence would be of any value. The thing happened some time ago—then he must give satisfactory proof of his identity, that he is the very man who was concerned in the events when they happened, or was in a condition to know about them. If there is any serious doubt about this, if he cannot, or will not, answer these preliminary questions to the satisfaction of the court, what he says about other things goes for nothing.

When our witness has made it clear who he is, what he is, and what are his means of knowledge, he proceeds to tell his story—but it is not *any* kind of story which will do. He must tell a story on which he is willing to be cross-examined, and expects to be cross-examined. The evidence of a witness on any other condition is of very little value. If he were not ready to have his words sifted, and weighed, and to have one statement compared with another, his words would be worth nothing as evidence.

He must be ready to answer all those questions which



are necessary to bring out his story clearly : he must be ready to give all the details required to make his account an intelligible one : he must be willing to explain the meaning of the words he has used. Both sides ask this of him. The counsel on his own side asks him questions to make the meaning of his story plain, and then his opponents further cross-examine him to make sure that he really understands what he is talking about, and that his story is consistent. If a witness declined any such cross-examination, what would be thought of his evidence? Supposing he made a statement in one form of words, and when asked the meaning of them, he could only repeat the same words again, like a parrot, and leave it to the court to make what it could of them? If that was all he could do, I think all mankind would agree that his evidence was worthless.

A witness, then, to be of any value, must be ready to stand cross-examination ; that is, must allow his evidence to be sifted and compared, one part with another, and must be willing to answer all reasonable questions.

The next thing obviously is that his evidence shall be consistent—that it shall “hold water,” as people say. It is *not* necessary that his evidence should be easy to believe, or what his hearers would have antecedently supposed to be probable. On the contrary, what he has to say may be very unexpected, and the story, at first sight, an unlikely one. “Truth,” we are often told, “is stranger than fiction,” and it is not at all required of a witness to say precisely what the audience expected. A story, we all know, may be *too* plausible, and *too* complete, so it is not necessary that the evidence given should at once fall in with the

preconceived notions of the court. But it *must* be consistent. If there is any serious discrepancy, if one part of the story is inconsistent in any important matter with the rest, then the evidence given would at once be set aside.

In the same way, the evidence given must be constant : our witness must not tell one story at the beginning and another at the end of the trial. If he contradicts to-day what he said yesterday, no one will attach much importance to his words. He must go on saying the same thing, and sticking to the same story, if he is to be believed.

Now these qualities and characteristics, which I say must be found in every trustworthy and available witness, are to be found in the Roman Church, and nowhere else. I think any one who carefully considers the subject will be obliged to admit this, whatever objection he may have to the Church, or however prejudiced he may be against her. In the first place, what account does the Catholic Church give of herself? Who is she? What is she? She never falters, and has never for one moment faltered, in her answer to these questions. During all ages, in season and out of season, she has declared herself to be the successor of the Apostolic body, the one witness and teacher appointed by our Lord, and has declared herself to be upheld and guided by His special Providence for this purpose. She tells you who she is, and what she is. Her limits and her organization are patent to all the world; every one knows precisely the conditions of faith and obedience with which it is necessary to comply, if he would belong to her communion.

Then as to her identity. It cannot be denied, and is not denied, that she is the same corporate body which has

existed through all ages since the coming of Christ. It has of course been said a thousand times that her doctrine has changed, and that innovations have been introduced; that her discipline and form of government have altered; that her spirit is quite different. All these things are very easy to say, and have been said abundantly; but I do not think any one has ever seriously attempted to show that the corporate body which now exists, is not identical as a body with the Church of the early ages.

Who, for instance, would venture to assert that the present Roman Church is not the same body with the Roman Church at the Reformation? or that that Church was not plainly the same body which existed in the time of St. Gregory the Great? or of St. Leo the Great in the fifth century? or that *he* was not a ruler in direct succession from the Popes of the earlier centuries? No one—not even her bitterest enemy, has ever attempted to show *when* the present Roman Church began, at any later period than the times of the apostles. Its continuity is at least as plain as that of the British Monarchy from the time of the Norman Conquest, or as that of any monarchy in Europe, and has had far fewer breaks or difficulties in the line of succession than any of them. If I may venture once more to quote Macaulay's well-known passage: "The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable."



The Catholic Church, therefore, has distinctly the first essential of a trustworthy witness ; she knows precisely what she is, and what is her commission ; she can trace her history up to the time when the Revelation was first given ; can show her identity with that body to which the guardianship of that Revelation was entrusted, and can do this in such a manner, that her opponents cannot help admitting it, either expressly or tacitly.

And she can stand cross-examination. Has not her history, for eighteen hundred years, been one long cross-examination? Every heresy that has arisen has been an examination into the meaning of her message. She has been cross-examined about the Blessed Trinity ; about our Lord's Divine and Human Natures ; about grace and the sacramental system—on a thousand questions of dogma and morals, and in every instance she has had a clear and decided answer to give. Arius, Nestorius, Pelagius, down to Luther and Jansenius, and the opponents of the present day—each in turn has challenged her doctrine and demanded further explanation of her message, and she has given it. And this has not been a mere “cut and dried” answer to escape difficulties, but an answer going to the root of each objection and settling it once and for ever. Friend and foe alike cross-examine her.

Every hostile writer knows, or thinks he knows, precisely her position on all points, and immediately he proceeds to ask a whole series of questions about her faith, her morals, her discipline, and her history : he is triumphant if he can come upon a weak point in her history, or a discrepancy in her theology, arising probably from his own supreme ignor-



ance of the subject : he even thinks he has made a great point if he can find a statement by one priest which contradicts the words of another priest, though we priests are very far from claiming infallibility. In short, the Church is constantly in the witness-box, and every one thinks he has a right to ask as many questions as he pleases. If we turn round and ask them a few questions, they are greatly aggrieved, and say that we are evading the point : they consider it is for them to put difficulties, and for us to answer them, and are by no means prepared to reverse the process.

Well, we accept the situation. The Church *is* God's witness, and is always ready to answer every question asked in good faith.

The Church, moreover, is cross-examined by her children as well as by her foes. There is a constant stream of questions on matters of faith, on points of morals, on practical difficulties going up to the supreme tribunal of the Church from all parts of her wide dominion, and not a day passes on which her supreme authority does not give some clear elucidation of her doctrine and practice in answer to these questions.

And it cannot be denied that her testimony is consistent. Her enemies may object to her teaching, and say it is hard to be believed, but they cannot, and do not deny that it is consistent : each part agrees with all the rest. You hear people talk of her "iron rule and uniformity," or, as Dr. Mahan puts it, about "mere verbal consistency"; and they tell you that "consistency is not truth," and so forth. What is this but tacitly allowing that they cannot deny the consistency of her teaching?

As one part of her teaching is consistent with all the rest, so is her teaching in one age consistent with the teaching of every other age. What she says once, she says for ever. This, too, her enemies seem to admit, and they admit it as much as anything by the very objections they make. If they were not substantially obliged to admit the consistency of her teaching, what would be the object of recurring, again and again, to two or three doubtful stories many hundred years old? to Pope Liberius in the fourth century, or Pope Honorius in the seventh? If that is all they can find to say against the consistency of the Church's teaching, isn't it rather like giving up the question?

This consistency is not about simple matters, but about the deepest and most intricate subjects on which men's minds can be engaged. As Cardinal Newman says: "Any one false step would have thrown the whole theory of the doctrine into irretrievable confusion; but it was as if some one individual and perspicacious intellect, to speak humanly, ruled the theological discussion from first to last. That in the long course of centuries, and in spite of the failure, in points of details of the most gifted Fathers and Saints, the Church thus wrought out the one and only consistent theory which can be taken on the great doctrine in dispute (the Divine Person and two Natures of our Lord), proves how clear, simple, and exact, her vision of the doctrine was"—"Essay on Development," p. 448.

And if the Church has been consistent throughout, she has been as conspicuous for her tenacity—that is, she has maintained her teaching in spite of the most violent opposition. The wishes of emperors and kings, the

"spirit of the age," the views of advanced science, the murmurs of the populace, have all been as nothing to her, when it was a question of preserving the integrity of that evidence which had been entrusted to her keeping. "There will be a time," St Paul says, "when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (2 Tim. iv. 3). How often has this prophecy been fulfilled in the history of the Church, and how unflinchingly has she stood up for the purity of the truth committed to her care!

But now let us ask: Is there any other body on earth which can make good a claim to be our Lord's witness on earth? Is there any other capable of bearing witness? But, first, it may be said that we do not need such a witness as I have spoken of, since Holy Scripture itself is a sufficient witness. It does not belong to my subject to go much into the question of the proper use of Holy Scripture, and therefore I will only consider it precisely with regard to its qualifications as a witness.

What does the Holy Scripture say of itself? Well, every one knows that it tells us very little or nothing. We find nowhere a definition of what is Scripture, of what books are inspired, or of how they are to be used. Certainly nowhere does it tell us that it is the witness on which our Lord meant men to rely. On the face of it, it is plain that some witness external to itself is required. It would be impossible for men to tell what the Holy Scripture was, or what was its authority, unless it were put before them as the Word of God by some qualified witness. It is plain that it needs a witness, and therefore cannot



itself be that witness intended by our Lord to be sufficient. Again, plainly, it cannot be cross-examined. For ages have men been trying to get at its correct meaning, and unless some external authority intervenes, they are as far off as ever from coming to an agreement. Plainly a book cannot take the place of a living witness, and plainly it was never meant to do so.

To return, however, to the subject I am specially anxious to treat, let us consider the case of other bodies—rivals, as they would fain be—of the Catholic Church. First, how would the Church of England figure as a witness? Does it even seriously pretend to be the witness appointed by our Lord to give testimony to mankind? The Church of England! does it claim to have any mission to the world at large? Had it any existence before England herself, as such, existed? The very name seems enough to negative any such pretension. But what is it? Is it a corporate body at all, as distinguished from the State? It professedly rests upon the State, and has never yet acted as a body except through the State. Every bishop holds directly of the State. Every bishop makes his homage to the Crown in these words :

“I, —, Doctor in Divinity, now elected, confirmed, and consecrated Bishop of —, do hereby declare that your Majesty is the only supreme governor of this your realm in spiritual and ecclesiastical things, as well as in temporal, and that no foreign prelate or potentate has any jurisdiction within this realm : and I acknowledge that I hold the said bishopric, as well the spiritualities as the temporalities thereof, only of your Majesty. And for the



same temporalities I do my homage presently to your Majesty. So help me God.

"God save Queen Victoria." \*

Can it be considered to have any corporate existence apart from the State? If it were separated from the State to-morrow, it would, no doubt, become a corporate body—but would it not become a *new* and a different body? Would it not, at once, have to set up a new organization, new "articles of association"? The present extraordinary division in the Church of England, even whilst under the authority of the State, seems to show that such a course would absolutely be necessary. At this moment the clergy and laity are disagreeing on the most vital questions, and yet the Church of England, as such, has not a word to say. She has nothing to declare about her own corporate existence, or her claims to obedience, or her doctrines.

Again, how can it be said to have any continuity with early ages, before England was a nation, or with the Church that existed in the earlier part of England's history? Clearly, before the Reformation it was not a corporate body, but a part of a corporate body, in full communion with the rest of that body throughout the world, and with the Holy See. From being a part of a body it became a complete body corporate—if it is one—by being wrenched forcibly away from the great body of which it then formed a part. It clearly was founded by St. Augustine on St. Gregory's authority, and as a part of that great corporate body over which St. Gregory presided.

\* Quoted from a letter addressed by Earl Russell to *The Times*, 5th March, 1875.

Just listen to what St. Gregory says to St. Augustine :  
“Since the new Church of the English has been brought to the grace of Almighty God, through the favour of the same Lord and your labours, We grant you the use of the pallium, to be used in it [the English Church], exclusively at the solemn celebration of the Mass : in order that you may ordain, for as many places, twelve bishops, who shall be subject to your rule, but so that the bishop of the city of London may in future be consecrated by his own synod and receive the pallium of office from this Holy and Apostolic See, to which by God’s ordinance, I minister. And We wish you to send a bishop to the city of York, having ordained one who may seem to you suitable for the purpose ; but so that if the same city, with the neighbouring districts, shall receive the Word of God, he also may ordain twelve bishops and enjoy the dignity of a metropolitan : for, if We be spared, We propose, with the Divine permission, to give him also the pallium, wishing nevertheless, that he be subject to the orders of your Paternity. But, after your death, let him govern the bishops whom he has ordained, and not to be subject in any way to the Bishop of London. . . . But let your Paternity have subject to itself, by the ordinance of God our Lord Jesus Christ, not only the bishops which it has ordained, nor only those ordained by the Bishop of York, but also all the priests of Britian,” and again : “Over any Gallic Bishops We give you no authority ; since, from the ancient times of my predecessors, the Bishop of Arles has obtained the pallium, and We ought not to deprive him of the authority received. . . . Whatever, therefore, needs to be done by authority (in reference to any Gallic Bishops) must be done

through the said Bishop of Arles, . . . but We commit all the Bishops of the Britons to your Paternity, that the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened through persuasion, the perverse corrected by authority."\*

Can it be denied, in the face of words like these, that the Church in England was, to begin with, distinctly a part of a great corporate body, then and now existing, and that it was torn away by the violence of Henry VIII., who silenced all opposition in blood? If it is a corporate body in itself, it clearly must have begun then, in the sixteenth century. The limbs of living creatures are not bodies, but parts of bodies: if an arm or a leg were cut off, and could live by itself, it would obviously begin to be a body only from the time when it was separated. It must then acquire a new and different organization from what it had before, and it would date its new existence from the time when it ceased to be a part of the old organization.

The Church of England, then, fails to establish an identity with any corporate body existing before the sixteenth century.

But can the Church of England be cross-examined as a witness? The one salient and remarkable point about that Church is that she never yet has spoken. She received certain formularies of faith and books of ritual from the authority of the Crown, by Act of Parliament: has she ever given an authoritative explanation on any one point? In vain, for centuries, she has been called upon; questions have been put on the most important subjects: no answer can be got. The vital question of baptismal regeneration

\* Quoted in Father Sydney Smith's very able book: "The Alleged Antiquity of Anglicanism."



is discussed, and an answer is obtained, not from the Church of England, but from a court of law; the answer, not of a witness telling of those things which he knows, but of a lawyer deciding upon old documents, as he might about the construction of a will.

If any one were anxious at this moment to get the opinion of the Church of England on any point, could he possibly obtain it? He could, no doubt, get the private opinion of any number of her members, clerical or lay, who might, or might not, agree; but I think every one must admit that he could not possibly get anything which could be called the authoritative answer of the Church of England.

Then as to consistency in her testimony. It is clear that one who declines to speak at all, cannot, in one sense, be inconsistent. We cannot hear her voice, but we can see her formulas. These are, I think admittedly, as far as possible from being consistent. The Prayer Book and the Articles are in an entirely different tone. The High Church party pin their faith to the Prayer Book, and say as little as they can about the Articles, and indeed, as far as we can see, would be very glad to get rid of them altogether. The Low Church party, on the other hand, seem in many points to disregard the plain teaching of the Prayer Book, and stand fast by the Articles, or some of them.

Inconsistency, indeed, appears to be the special mark of the Church of England. It was established as a compromise, and its formularies were drawn up, almost avowedly to include as many people of plainly different beliefs as possible. Its very basis is an inconsistency: something



between authority and private judgment. These two things as ultimate authorities are plainly incompatible ; you can believe a doctrine because you are taught it by authority, *or* because it seems to you reasonable and well proved, but you cannot believe on both of these grounds. Dr. Mahan, as I have above said, tries to make a compromise between the two, but I think it is a failure. If the authority and your private judgment do not agree, it is clear you must give up one or the other.

What sort of a witness is the Church of England as to the great truths of Christianity? as to the Blessed Trinity? as to the Divinity of our Lord? as to the Sacraments? She says nothing herself, but she has, again and again, admitted to her highest offices men who were notoriously unorthodox with regard to some of these great truths. She has allowed, and does at this moment allow, men who do not believe in baptismal regeneration to remain teaching and ministering in her name. Amongst her clergy, it is well known, all sorts of religious opinions can be found, each putting forward his own views unchecked.

One age is inconsistent with the next. In one century her teachers are mainly High Church, in the next Evangelical, in a third "Anglican," or "Broad Church," as the case may be.

How, then, can the Church of England pretend to be the witness left on earth by Christ to proclaim His truth to men? She cannot establish her identity as a corporate body with the Church of the early ages ; she cannot stand the least cross-examination, or answer the plainest question : she is hopelessly inconsistent in her formularies, and allows her ministers to hold contradictory opinions even on the

greatest truths of religion. In a word, she is wanting in every one of those qualities which an available witness must necessarily possess. It is fair to say that the Church of England does not seem to have any particular ambition to claim the character of witness to Christ's faith on earth.

But Anglicans will say that by "the Church" they do not mean the Church of England alone. They mean something much wider. The Church, with them, means, to use the words before quoted, the "great body spreading through East and West, and serving God in all languages," or as Cardinal Newman puts it, describing his former opinions: "The whole of Christendom, from the apostles' time till now, whatever their later divisions into Latin, Greek, and Anglican." "I mean," he says, "neither the Latin, nor the Greek, nor the English, taken by itself, but I speak of the whole Church as one body: of Italy as one with England, of the Saxon and the Norman as one with the Caroline Church" ("Apologia," Appendix, p. 12).

Let us, then, see what sort of a claim this "great body" can make out to call itself the witness established by our Lord. What account would this "Church" give of itself, if called on to act as a witness? What is it? Where is it to be found? What is its constitution? What is its history? At once there arises a confused chorus of a thousand contradictory answers. This "Church" does not speak for itself, for it obviously *cannot* speak; it has no voice, no power of action, no organs of any sort.

The one thing obvious about it is that no man, and no body of men has a right to speak in the name of this supposed Church. Let individual voices then be heard. At once, nineteen-twentieths of the supposed members

of this body most emphatically declare that they are not members of any such body, and that no such body exists. "There is not on earth," they all assert, "any body which comprises Latin, Greek, and Anglican, and there never has been such a body." Such would be the unhesitating answer of all Catholics, and all Greeks; and, I suppose, the great bulk of the professing members of the Church of England would be quite as energetic as we are, in denying that they had any connection with such a body, or that the body existed.

It cannot then speak for itself—and its supposed members repudiate it—and no one, even its best friends, can tell you anything about it: its limits, its organization, its headquarters, its powers of making itself heard or any one of those things which are essential, if it is to be witness to our Lord. Let us see, then, what account can be given of its history? Is it able to make good a claim to have come down from our Lord's time? I think the most energetic partisan must admit that the idea of such a Church is absolutely a new one, and has no place in history.

The ancients knew very well what was meant by the Roman Church, or by Arians, or Nestorians, or Donatists but they certainly did not know of the existence of a Church which was Roman and Arian at the same time; they knew of the Donatists and St. Augustine and their disputes, but they did not know of a Church which included them both: so in England we used to know of Catholics and Protestants, but we used not to be able to understand a Church including both, formed by uniting into one body, against their own will, men whose belief and principles were diametrically opposed on the most important subjects.



If the Church, understood in this wide sense, can give no account of its present existence or past history, it is clear that it cannot fulfil the other offices of witness in a more satisfactory manner. I think every one must admit that such a Church cannot possibly give any account of her doctrine. She simply cannot bear witness to anything, she cannot speak, no one can appeal to her on any subject and expect an answer, and as far as her power of bearing witness to Christ, she might just as well not exist—if, indeed, she does exist at all. This is her condition now, always has been her condition, and in the nature of things always must be her condition.

The Church of England has, at any rate, some sort of organization ; it is dependent upon the State, indeed, but it has a corporate body of some kind, and it has organs of some kind, though they cannot speak ; but this imaginary Church has nothing which even looks like a corporate body, or organs by which it might possibly act.

It seems hardly necessary to speak of other Protestant bodies, inasmuch as they do not profess to be witnesses established by Christ. The heresies of the early Church considered themselves — erroneously, indeed — but considered themselves to be the legitimate continuation of the society established by Christ. The theory at least of Arians, Nestorians, and so forth, was that their doctrines were the genuine interpretation of the message left on earth by our Lord, that they were the real Church established by Him. In later times, however, men separated from the Church on a new principle : *not* that they were the witness appointed by Christ, but that they had found out some new reading of the Scripture which they imagined to be more

correct than the teaching of the Church : they were not our Lord's witness, but knew better than the witness He had appointed. It is clear, for instance, that Luther's views did not profess to be more than a scheme of theology which he himself had devised by his own reasoning and interpretation of Scripture, a teaching which he considered had escaped the notice of those who had gone before him. It did not profess to be a continuation of any former teaching, but a new thing, an improvement on what had been believed before.

The same applies to all subsequent sects. What do the Wesleyans profess to be but representatives of the private views of their founder?—views which they no doubt consider Scriptural, but they do not claim, as an association, to go beyond his time. If they speak of a Church, then, it is quite plain that they mean quite a different thing from what we mean ; it is therefore unnecessary to consider their position more at length.

There remains, then, only one more possible witness for our consideration—the Greek Church ; that, at any rate, can claim great antiquity, and agrees in the main with the Catholic Church.

Here again we must ask : What is the Greek Church ? What account can it give of itself ? Well, it seems clear to begin with, that there is no corporate body which can reasonably be called the Greek Church. There are at present a number of separate bodies, holding substantially the same doctrines, but without any common organization whatever.

“We will begin,” says Dr. Döllinger, “with the oldest of the dismembered Churches, the Oriental, or ‘Orthodox

Anatolian Church,' which recognises the Patriarch of Constantinople as its head. It embraced formerly all the countries of the Greek Empire, but has been for some time past continually crumbling away, by ecclesiastical resistance to, and separation from it, of particular portions. The separations have been based on the antagonism of various nationalities, and on the decay of the Turkish Empire, which, in the day of its power, upheld, for the sake of its own interest, the authority of the Patriarch. The Hellenic Church, that of the kingdom of Greece, has declared itself independent; the Metropolitan of Carlowitz, with his eleven bishops, has done the same, and his Church is now an independent patriarchate. The Churches of Cyprus, of Montenegro, and of Mount Sinai, have declared their independence. In the Danubian Principalities a similar attempt has been made to form an independent Romaic Church. Almost all the organs of the press there, demand a solemn declaration of the independence of the 'Moldavo-Wallachian Church,' and formation of a 'Moldavo-Wallachian Synod.'"

The "Orthodox Oriental Church of Hellas" was declared independent of every foreign authority in 1833, the Russian towards the end of the sixteenth century. "The Russian Church has been, since the separation from the patriarchate of Constantinople (1587), a completely isolated National Church, without any connection with the rest of the Christian world." \*

Such being the state of the facts, can any one properly and fairly speak of the "Greek Church" as a Church at all in any reasonable sense? There are several corporate

\* "The Church and the Churches." By Dr. Döllinger, pp. 122—131.



bodies, each declared independent of all the world, having each its own government and organization, each comparatively small in numbers, and all, in their present constitution, very modern—only a century or two old at most; can any one of these, or all of them together, establish even a possible claim to be the witness of God upon earth?

But now let us look to the history of the Greek Church, and see whether that is more satisfactory than its present condition as a corporate body. Nobody, I suppose, doubts that it was once a part of the great corporate body of which now Rome is the head; and, moreover, that this was the case at the time of its greatest religious activity, when it was most full of religious thought, and produced saints in the greatest abundance. Nor do I think that any one will deny that the Greek Church, at that time, looked up to Rome as—in some sense, at any rate—a head. We find the Greeks and the Latins meeting at council after council, but though these councils were held in the East, under the shadow of the great Eastern patriarchates, yet the Legates of the Bishop of Rome presided.

At the Council of Ephesus, Philip, the Papal Legate, thus addresses the council: "It is a matter of doubt to none—yea, rather, it is a thing known to all ages—that the holy and most blessed Peter, the Prince and Head of the Apostles, the pillar of the faith, the foundation of the Catholic Church, received the keys of the Kingdom from Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour and Redeemer of mankind. And to him was given authority to bind and to loose sins: who even to this present, and always, both lives and judges in his successors: our holy and most

blessed Pope Celestine, the Bishop, the canonical successor and Vicegerent of this Peter, has sent us as representatives of his person" (Conc. Eph. Acts. III. col. 625, Labbe, t. iii.)

The Council of Chalcedon consisted of five hundred bishops, nearly all from the East, and was held under the very walls of Constantinople; but notwithstanding this, as is well known, they simply accepted the formula of faith sent to them by Pope Leo, on his authority, and anathematized all whom he commanded them to anathematize.

The Acts of the Council say: "The most Reverend Bishop Paschasinus, the Legate of the Apostolic throne, having stood in the midst, together with those who had come with him, said: 'We have the injunction of the most blessed and Apostolic Bishop of the city of Rome, which is the head of all the Churches, in which injunction he has vouchsafed to set forth that Dioscorus is not to sit in the Council:'" and the deposition of Dioscorus is pronounced in the Pope's name: "'Wherefore the most holy and blessed Archbishop of the great and elder Rome, through us and the present most holy Synod, together with the thrice blessed and illustrious Peter the Apostle, who is the rock and foundation of the Catholic Church, and the foundation of the orthodox faith, has stripped him (Dioscorus) of his episcopacy, and removed him from all priestly dignity'" (Conc. Chal.).\*

I think no one can deny, in the face of the solemn Acts of these great Councils, that at this time the Greek Church

\* Quoted from Waterworth's "Faith of Catholics," vol. ii., pp. 84, 101.

was not a separate and independent body, but a part of a greater body, with which it was united by a common organization, and which recognised the Bishop of Rome as a head.

And how did the Greek Church become an independent corporate body? Did the Greek patriarchs, bishops, and clergy, after mature deliberation, come to the conclusion that their forefathers had been mistaken in supposing that the Pope, as the successor of St. Peter, was the rightful Head of Christ's Church? Did they come to see by deep study that their great Saint and hero, St. John Chrysostom, had been all wrong when he said, "Why did Christ shed His Blood? That He might obtain possession of those very sheep which He entrusted to St. Peter and to his successor?" and that St. Cyril of Alexandria was wrong when he called St. Celestine the Pope "Archbishop of all the habitable world?"

Or, on the other hand, were the Greek bishops driven to desperation by some outrageous tyranny on the part of Rome? or did the "growth of absolutism," of which Dr. Mahan speaks, result in acts of authority which flesh and blood could no longer endure? Not at all: the story is a very much more prosaic one.

Bardas was the uncle and tutor of the Greek Emperor, Michael III., called "the Drunkard," and was appointed "Cæsar," or inferior emperor, by him. The Patriarch of Constantinople, Ignatius, had occasion to censure Bardas for his immoral conduct, and, at last, as he did not amend his life, excommunicated him. Bardas thereupon deposed and imprisoned the Patriarch Ignatius, and caused to be elected in his place Photius, who was a relative, and first



Secretary of the Emperor. This Photius was a layman, and received the ecclesiastical tonsure on the 20th of December 857, and the other Orders on the five succeeding days. He was forthwith made Patriarch, and consecrated, on Christmas Day, by the Archbishop of Syracuse—who had himself been previously excommunicated and deposed.

The Emperor, however, found that his new Patriarch was not as well received as might be, and therefore sent an embassy to Pope Nicholas I., begging him to recognize Photius as the legitimate Patriarch. He asked the Pope to send ambassadors to Constantinople, “to put an end to the quarrels occasioned by the new appointment to the Patriarchate, and to remove the last traces of iconoclasm.”

The Pope did send ambassadors, but when, after great difficulties, he discovered the true facts of the case, he deprived Photius of the dignity he had assumed, and recognized Ignatius as true Patriarch. This was the beginning of the separation of the East from the West. The ground had already been well prepared by the corrupt state of the Empire, and the hatred and jealousy of the Greeks against the Latins; and when a small division arose, it was easy for ambitious men to widen the breach and make it permanent.

It must be allowed that it was a contemptible ground of quarrel. The Pope stood up for the cause of justice, and the independence of the Church, and therefore the Greeks cast him off. The whole story has a painful likeness to the history of the schism in England. It was *not* the Church, but the State, which originated the separation—the State, of course, working a good deal by clerical tools :

when once the Pope is out of the way, the State can always please itself in making bishops. The schism was brought about, in each case, by a despotic monarch; and in each case the ground of complaint was, that the Pope would not acquiesce in an injustice.

Again and again efforts were made to bring about a reunion with the Holy See, especially at the Council of Florence in the fifteenth century. There was nothing to prevent reunion; all the small difficulties were easily cleared away, and the Oriental Bishops had no difficulty in acknowledging the supremacy of the Holy See, but all fell to the ground through that same hatred and jealousy of the Latins which had caused the original separation.

If, then, the Oriental Church is a body, it is a body which began its corporate existence at a very late period, and cannot claim any connection with Apostolic times, except through the greater body, of which they were then a part; so it signally fails to show its identity.

But even if it could give more satisfactory answers as to its identity and its history, the question remains: Is it now in fact, or has it ever been, a witness to Christ, in the sense of standing up for His revelation, and being ready to give explanations to all comers, and to answer all questions? No one doubts that it was so once—and indeed, that it took the lead in all controversies, and lent its acuteness and zeal to elucidating all the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation. Yes, but that was before it professed to be a separate body, whilst it gloried in being a part of the Church, closely united to its central government. What has it done since? What part has it

taken in all the great controversies—the intellectual wars of modern times? Little or nothing: it is hardly too much to say that the Oriental Church has simply slumbered, and that the great gift of Catholic faith has been little more than a talent wrapped in a napkin.

But is the Greek Church, or any of those separate bodies of which it is composed, in a condition at the present time to do any more? Let us hear what is their present state. “The Patriarch,” says Dr. Döllinger, “whose sway still extends over about nine millions of persons, has in some respects, more than a Papal power. He can appoint or remove, on his own irresponsible authority, all archbishops, bishops, and priests, and, with the exception of four prelates belonging to the standing Synod, can relegate them all to their dioceses. He possesses at the same time an extensive civil jurisdiction, the right of punishment, and an unlimited power of taxation. His whole administration has now been, for hundreds of years, connected with an unexampled system of extortion, corruption, and simony. Every Patriarch attains by these means to his dignity. According to long-established precedent, the Patriarch is usually changed every two or three years; he is, namely (the custom originates in Turkish despotism and Greek corruption), deposed by the Synod for bad administration, or he is compelled to resign. The cases in which a Patriarch dies in possession of his dignity are extremely rare, for those who make a profit by bargains for the patriarchate take care that they shall be transacted as often as possible. When the Patriarch has purchased the dignity of his deposed predecessor for hard cash, he gets his money back again by the sale of archbishoprics and



bishoprics, and the purchasers of these, in their turn, make amends by extortions on the inferior clergy and the people." "Devotion to the civil power is so completely the lot of all special Churches that have been rent away from the one Universal world-Church, that the Greeks will even acknowledge their Turkish ruler as a supreme judge in ecclesiastical matters. As incredible as this appears, it has been stated, in the most decided terms, and in the most official form, in quite recent times. Pius IX., in his evangelical letter to the prelates of the East, in the year 1848, reminded them of their want of religious unity; and thereupon the Patriarch answered, in his name, and that of his Synod, 'In disputed or difficult questions, the three Patriarchs discuss the matter with the Patriarch of Constantinople, because that city is the seat of empire, and because he is the President of the Synod. If they cannot agree, the affair is, according to ancient precedent and usage, referred for decision to the head of the (Turkish) Government.'"

The three Patriarchs are those of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, and their condition is thus described: "The three other patriarchates, which, according to the Anatolian schismatic theory, exercise, in conjunction with that of Constantinople, the supreme authority in matters of faith are scarcely more than titular dignitaries, for the patriarchate of Alexandria has but five thousand, that of Antioch fifty thousand, and of Jerusalem twenty-five thousand souls. The Patriarch of Jerusalem has his regular summer residence on the Prince's Island, near the capital; and the two others reside, with [the Patriarch of Constantinople's] permission, and that of the Synod, in the capital itself."

Can any one really believe that a Church with such a history, so small, so corrupt, and so dependent on the civil power, can be the representative of that Church which our Lord left to be the witness to the world of His Divine truth? Can this be the "city set upon a hill" which all men are to look for? The Russian and Greek Churches, which include the great bulk of Greek Christians, are governed, not by a Patriarch, but by Synods appointed by the Sovereign, and are entirely under the control of the secular authority. In Russia, this Synod, "being in itself a body without a soul, receives the principle of life from the Czar, through the Procurator (a layman), without whose signature none of its proceedings are valid, and none of its words have any power. It cannot even appoint its secretary and subordinate officials, but they are all nominated and displaced by the Czar. It subsists only by the will of the Emperor, and merely to fulfil his commands." \*

Now it may be asked: What is the use of dwelling on all these misfortunes of the Oriental Church? on its hopeless division and corruption? and on the heavy yoke of temporal power under which every part of it groans? Is it not ungenerous and unkind? Is it not simply a way of indirectly glorifying ourselves? It is not a question of praise or blame to any one. We have something much more important in hand than considering the shortcomings of our neighbours. We have to find out which body of men is the witness our Lord left on earth, since we are convinced that He *must* have left some witness, and that He actually did so.

\* Dr. Döllinger, "The Church and the Churches," pp. 123, 125, 132.

There can be but *one* such body, and that body alone can show the necessary characteristics, and the conditions for performing the work He gave it to do—conditions which certainly do not depend on the personal qualities of any man or set of men. No other body, in the nature of things, can show the same qualities, and it certainly is not their fault that they do not do what it is impossible for men to accomplish—not their fault, but their great misfortune, to be separated from that body which our Lord intended to be their guide.

To recapitulate the argument of this chapter: I have been trying to establish that it is essential to such a revelation as God has given to men in the Christian faith, that a permanent witness to that revelation should be left on earth—and that to give this witness to men must essentially be the first office of His Church. Can any one who really believes in a Church at all deny this? If not for this object, what can you suppose to be the good of a Church?

If this is really the primary object of Christ's Church, that Church must be so constituted as to be able to carry out this object, and must, in fact, carry it out: this seems to follow as a matter of course.

But the only body existing on earth which is capable of fulfilling the functions of a witness, is the Roman Church; this, by the confession of all mankind, is able to bear testimony, and does bear testimony, and there is no other body on earth which even professes to be the witness established by God, or whose pretensions can bear one moment's examination.



## CHAPTER III

### TEACHER AND GUIDE

A Teacher needed—The Old Law—Dogma and Sacraments—Moral Teaching—Commanding and exhorting—Qualities of Teacher—Seen in the Roman Church—Her watchful rule—The Church of England as a Teacher—Her Organs : the Archbishop, Convocation—Many Religions—Missions—Pan-Anglican Synods—The “ Branch-Church ”—Oriental Churches—Difficulties.

THE Church is a witness, but a witness in two senses. She is, first, a witness to an unbelieving world, to proclaim Christ crucified : “ We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews, indeed, a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God ” (1 Cor. i. 23).

This must always be the first work of the Church, because, in all ages, a stubborn world is disposed to resist any revelation coming from God. If it does not entirely reject Revelation, it is always striving to bend and modify it to suit its own ideas. The special temptation of our fallen nature is to rebel against God, and to glorify human reason ; and reason, being in league with the flesh and the devil, is always inclined to put the supernatural out of sight, and to turn away from whatever seems to it hard or distasteful. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that there should be some authority to insist upon Revelation, and

constantly to recall it to the minds of men. This authority must be one divinely established, for nothing which comes from men can stand for long against the keenness and subtlety of reason. Everything founded upon the opinion of men must, in the long run, give way to that opinion, however it may fluctuate : to oppose the tide of human feelings and passions, an authority must have a deeper foundation than mere reason—that is, it must be established by God. The Church, indeed, can resist both the rebellious reason and the fiery passions of men : *Fluminis impetus lætificat civitatem Dei*. The City of God is only purified by the storm, however violent it may be, but all human institutions fall before it. It was necessary, therefore, that our Lord should Himself establish such a living permanent institution, as a witness to keep His faith before the eyes of men.

But the Church has another office to fulfil : she must be a witness in another sense also—that is, she must be a teacher to those who are within. No sooner have men been brought into captivity “unto the obedience of Christ,” than they need some one to teach them the “mysteries of the Kingdom of God,” to explain to them the details of God’s revelation, to lead them into His sanctuary, and show them how to avail themselves of the redemption that has been purchased for them.

“How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach unless they be sent?” (Rom. x. 14). From these words we may infer two things—first, that there must be a teacher, and secondly, that this teacher must have a special commission to teach. This seems evident, to begin with, from the very notion of religion. A religion

is not a mere philosophy, not a mere collection of abstract ideas, on which people can speculate and form their own conclusions. A religion is an obedience, a discipline which has to affect practical life, which must guide and rule our conduct so as to make this life a preparation for the life to come. It is necessary that it should have a system of faith so complete as to throw a sufficient light on our condition and our duties, and on all we have to do to save our souls.

We require not merely speculative knowledge, but we must know how to apply this knowledge to all the contingencies of actual life. This application has to be made, not anyhow, but in the precise way which God has appointed. I think it is clear that such a knowledge as this—a knowledge able to direct the ever-varying conditions of all sorts of men—cannot be supplied by any book, but requires the assistance of a living teacher, and of a living teacher sent by God.

This may be well illustrated from the history of St. Paul. As I before noticed, the very first command given to him on his conversion, was this: "Arise, go into the city, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts ix. 7)—that is, he was at once referred to the instruction of a living teacher. Then he tells us: "I went into Arabia, and again I returned into Damascus. Then, after three years, I went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and I tarried with him fifteen days" (Gal. i. 17)—so that, although he had received a special revelation, he was directed to make a long preparation and to receive oral teaching from the brethren before he entered upon the labours of his apostolate.



It seems clear that there can be nothing worthy to be called a religion without a teacher of some kind: unity would be impossible. Without a teacher, religion would be merely a collection of personal judgments, conclusions, and aspirations. Every man would have his own faith, his own rules of morality, his own way of salvation, isolated from all the world. Each one would judge for himself, and no two would go exactly the same way; there would be no *common* religion amongst men. "Each one hath turned aside into his own way"—these words would certainly describe the case if there were no living teacher—each one would have his own religion and follow his own path.

But it may be objected that there are, in fact, many religious bodies which admit no living teaching authority, and that I cannot deny that they may well be called "religions"; and that I cannot but admit that they have at least some degree of unity and coherence. Certainly they profess to listen to no living authority, and to be united together by the individual working out of great principles in which they agree; but, in fact, every sect has its own living code, its *lex non scripta*, and it is in virtue of this living and teaching, though unacknowledged, code, and not by its general principles, that it is a religion.

A good many sects, for instance, profess simple private judgment; they go by the Word of God, and not by the teaching of man. They think themselves, and perhaps call themselves, pure "Bible Christians," but in each one of these you will find that the view that they are to take of the Holy Scripture is very carefully laid down. They are to look at it in this light and no other; these texts are to

be put forward and insisted on, the others must be ignored, some need careful handling, and so forth. Their followers are as free as air in their interpretation of the Bible, only they must not find anything in it which clashes with the living tradition of their body.

It is "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible." Only, if you were to find even a trace of Popery in it, you would at once find yourself an alien to the society professing this unrestricted freedom of judgment. So of ceremonial: they are loud in their reprobation of all ceremonies in the service of God: "How can Christians be tied down by such material bonds?" and so forth. If, however, you touch the usages of their own ceremonial code, if you bring in or leave out anything which is at variance with the living tradition of the society, every one is up in arms at once. In short, in practice they go, not by the outspoken theory of the sect, but the tacit, unacknowledged teaching of their society, in virtue of which they are really a religion, although perhaps the members of the society are, to a great degree, unconscious of it.

I am not blaming them in the least; it must be so in the nature of things. There never was in the world a religious society which had not a living teacher of some kind. Even in the Jewish Church, although everything was laid down so minutely in the written law, there was a living teacher: "The Scribes and Pharisees have sat on the chair of Moses" (St. Matt. xxiii. 2). "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts" (Mal. ii. 7). The people were not to go by

their own reading of the Law, but by the authorized interpretation. It would, I think, have been impossible for them to hold together in one religious body, if it had been open to each individual to settle for himself how every provision of the Law was to be carried out; what was to be insisted on strictly, what was in some degree figurative, what was essential, and what unimportant.

If such a teaching was necessary in the Old Law, it is plainly much more necessary in the Christian Dispensation. In the New Testament we have nothing like a systematic teaching—that is, we find no complete exposition of either doctrine or practice. It was written, for the most part, not immediately for the instruction of the world at large, but for the direction of particular Churches when some special difficulty arose. It was written, moreover, with a constant reference to other teaching which was not written “But there are also many other things which Jesus did; which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written” (St. John xxi. 25); whereas our Lord says: “Going, therefore, teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (St. Matt. xxviii. 20). Again, St. Paul having given the Corinthians instructions on some subjects, concludes by saying: “And the rest I will set in order when I come.” It is manifest, then, that the writings of the New Testament were not intended to supersede a living teacher, but were only meant to enforce and explain some parts of a doctrine already delivered.

A living teacher of some sort is therefore necessary, if any kind of religion is to be drawn from the New Testa-



ment ; and accordingly we see that those who revolted from the teaching of the Church, and most loudly proclaimed the doctrine of private judgment, did, in fact, at once set up an authoritative teaching of their own. Who, for instance, was ever more arbitrary and overbearing than Luther? Who ever condemned those who differed from his doctrine with greater sternness? Who ever anathematized those who ventured to set up an interpretation of Scripture in opposition to his views more freely than he did? So it has been with all sects : although they started with the principle of private judgment, they at once felt the necessity of some living teaching if they were ever to be a religion at all.

Without such teaching, there can be no unity ; and, as a natural consequence, there can be no sort of security. You cannot possibly have any confidence that your interpretation of the Scripture is the correct one if it is made on your own authority only. "Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest? And he said : And how can I unless some man show me?" (Acts viii. 30). Such must ever be the feeling of a man who is really judging for himself in such difficult matters : if he has any security at all, it comes not from his own judgment—whatever he may think—but because he is, in fact, following out the traditional idea of the meaning which, he thinks, comes to him on good authority, and is largely held by others.

A living teaching authority of some kind or other, however informal, is necessary even in those societies which have no settled dogma, where religion is supposed to consist in reading the Bible, and where internal

emotions and personal convictions take the place of a systematic code of morals ; even in these there is a living authority. When there is nothing particular to teach, and nothing to be learned but what each one can make out for himself, we do not exactly see why there should be a teacher, or indeed a society at all ; but plainly there is such a teaching authority, and the society could not exist without it. But when people believe that there *is* something to be taught ; when they recognise that our Lord came to teach men a complete system of faith and morals ; that He established ordinances which they were to follow, and instituted sacraments by which they were to be helped in the way of salvation, the imperative necessity of a teacher is at once apparent. It is not only because common teaching is required for any sort of unity and security, but because, without such teaching, no system can possibly be worked out in the detail necessary for practical use.

If each one had to construct a system for himself out of books, without the aid of authority, such systems must remain incomplete and visionary, and never could be brought into working order. We may take an illustration from science. Here, if anywhere, we have a kind of knowledge which each one has to find out for himself by his own reason and experiment ; and yet, I think, there could be no science if there were no authority. If each student had to begin and find out everything for himself, it seems clear that no advance could ever be made : science would always be beginning, and no results worth naming would ever be obtained. Even the scientific man must begin as a student, taking for granted what he is taught

until he has learned the science, and his knowledge has some degree of completeness—then perhaps he will be in a condition to make discoveries for himself and to enlarge and correct what he has learned. It is the want of some systematic and authoritative teaching which occasions the wild paradoxes which not unfrequently afflict the scientific world. If this is true of a perfectly human science, much more must it be true of knowledge which is given to men by Divine Revelation.

Every dogma of the Christian religion must have remained in an incomplete and unsettled state if there had been no teaching authority. Take, for example, the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. Could we possibly have had the doctrine as we now have it, without the active intervention of a living teacher? Would it have been possible for us to make out the details of this great mystery from the Holy Scripture? You may say it is contained in Scripture: certainly. When you have the doctrine put clearly before you by the Church, you can see that her teaching is confirmed by Scripture; but could you possibly have found out what the Athanasian Creed tells us without that teaching? But tradition tells us, and the voice of the Fathers; yes, but without an authorized teacher who could possibly pronounce which was the true reading of tradition; who could tell us which *were* the Fathers, and which the heretical writers whom we ought to shun? Why are they "Fathers"? Is it not because their teaching is confirmed and sanctioned by the Church? It is, in fact, the approbation of the Church which makes them "the Fathers."

Again, about the Divine and Human Natures, and the



Person of our Lord. The division of opinion was, as we know, great and lasting. Appeals to Scripture and tradition were made without ceasing on both sides. The living authority of the Church decided, not once, but again and again; and it was nothing but her incessant, minute teaching, her sleepless vigilance, and her firm inflexible voice that gave us the great doctrine which is the foundation of our faith and hope. So, again, in the questions about Divine grace : great and indeed vital questions arose ; and these questions were only settled—could only be settled—in the same way : that is, by the voice of the living Church. Without a teaching authority, and one of the most active and energetic description, we should have had no complete faith ; there would have been hazy and uncertain speculation about some great truths, but there would have been nothing like a system of Christian doctrine.

But I should like to dwell on a point which, it seems to me, brings out even more clearly, the necessity of a teacher. If you had the faith completely settled, you could not put it into practice without a teacher to show you how. Suppose, for instance, you are perfectly convinced of the necessity of Baptism ; at once a multitude of questions arises, and until these are answered you cannot put your belief into practice. What is necessary for the validity of Baptism ? Must you be baptized by immersion ? or is it enough to pour the water ? or will a simple sprinkling suffice ? There is nothing in Scripture to answer these questions, and no man could undertake to answer them for himself. Again, what form is necessary ? In the Acts of the Apostles we are told several times that different people were “baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Is the invocation of the Blessed Trinity necessary? No one can pronounce on this by his own authority. Ought infants to be baptized? or should those baptized by heretics be re-baptized? All these questions must be answered before we can practically apply our belief in the sacrament, and there are absolutely no data in Scripture on which to found a judgment.

The same difficulty appears to arise in a still more striking way about the Holy Eucharist. Let us suppose that you are absolutely convinced of our Lord's real presence in the Blessed Sacrament—again you have a host of questions to answer. What is the necessary matter? must it be unleavened bread, or will any kind of bread suffice? What is the necessary form of consecration? To whom did our Lord leave the power of consecrating? Is it a matter of necessity that the priest consecrating shall have been ordained by a bishop? Again, though the question is not so immediately practical, How is our Lord present? Is it by Transubstantiation, or in what other way? Is it a matter of obligation to receive under both kinds? Is it right to reserve the Blessed Sacrament? Is the Holy Eucharist a sacrament only, or a sacrament and sacrifice?

Would any one dare to administer so great and awful a sacrament as that of the Body and Blood of Christ without having come to some certain conclusion on these points? and yet they are all points which have been disputed, and I do not think any one would venture to say that there exist any sufficient data to settle them without the authority of the Church. "Do this in commemoration of Me"—the Church tells what you are to do, and how to do it, what exact matter and form you are to adopt, what pre-

cautions you must take, and what preparation is necessary—that is, she supplies you with all the practical details needful for carrying out our Lord's command. Without such practical teaching I do not see how any one could presume to administer the Holy Eucharist at all.

The same applies to the Sacrament of Penance. Suppose that you are quite convinced that our Lord intended to leave with His Church the power of forgiving sins, which His words so plainly convey, how is that power to be used? Can no one use it except a priest? Can every priest exercise it uncontrolled? Has each one a roving commission over the whole Church? or can he only exercise it for the benefit of those placed under his charge? On what conditions can sins be forgiven? Is confession a necessary preliminary or not? Must such confession be public or private?

There is nothing in the Holy Scripture which gives any reasonably certain answer to them. In St. James's Epistle we have, "Confess your sins, therefore, one to another" (St. James v. 16), and in the Acts we are told that "many of them that believed came confessing and declaring their deeds"; but I do not think any one would venture to build up a practice of confession on such vague hints; and yet the administration of the Sacrament of Penance without confession of some kind seems impossible.

You cannot, therefore, advance one step towards practically exercising this power, without some authority to tell you how, and on what conditions, it may be validly, lawfully, and safely used. What, for instance, can be more unsatisfactory than the way in which some clergymen of the Church of England act? They hear confessions, but they



are not commissioned to do so by any authority ; they hear confessions when and where they please, without any consideration whether the penitents are under their jurisdiction or not ; they follow their own ideas as to the method to be observed in administering the sacrament ; they have no rules, and no training, and are simply going by their own private light. To be sure, they have the guidance of the Catholic Church in these matters, and no doubt read Catholic books on the subject ; but they do not profess to regard the authority of the Roman Church, or it is clear they would not hear confessions at all.

Now I think every one must admit that hearing confessions is, in the nature of things, a matter in which strict regulation and the watchfulness of authority is absolutely necessary, if it is to be safely exercised ; and that giving to individuals credit for the best of intentions, this independent style of proceeding on any large scale must lead to evil. It illustrates, therefore, the difficulty or impossibility of putting into practice our Lord's commands, and administering His sacraments without the guidance of some living authority which can be implicitly trusted.

About Holy Orders in the same way. Who can tell what is necessary for the validity of Holy Orders ? Anglicans profess to be very certain as to the validity of their Orders ; they have no doubt as to the sufficiency of the forms used at different times in the Church of England. What ground can they have for this confidence except the purest private judgment ? and that a judgment which is exercised on the scantiest materials. It would seem incredible that any one could be so very certain in such a difficult matter simply on his own judgment, if it were not that very

good and conscientious men appear to be so thoroughly convinced.

What I have said of these sacraments applies to all the others. First, there is the dogmatic difficulty: to know with certainty what external actions our Lord intended to be sacraments—that is, to be the ordinary channels of grace to His Church; next, to know precisely the conditions for administering them validly; and when these points are settled, you must know how practically they are to be used, so as to be a benefit and not an injury to God's people.

What I have said about the sacraments applies in a measure to moral teaching. The very essence of a Church is to lead people to God by moral training—that is, by teaching them how to keep God's commandments. If this is not the object of a priesthood, what is it for? This is at least one of the essentials; "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth" (Mal. ii. 7); but how is he to get the knowledge himself if there is no living source from which he is to draw it? To be sure, great principles of morality are laid down in Holy Scripture, which is open to his flock as well as to himself. The general principles are plain, but, nevertheless, difficulties are constantly arising as to the carrying out of these principles.

Is the priest the organ of a higher teaching? has he authority to decide in religious matters? if so, there clearly is some supreme living authority. It cannot be that he is simply to go by his own private judgment, by his individual opinion, on matters about which every one else has the same means of judging that he has. In that case his

opinion would be worth very little, or nothing. "Reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine" (2 Tim. iv. 2). Yes, but first show that you have some position of authority which entitles you to speak, and some guarantee that the "doctrine" you enforce is the correct one. This can only be done, in the nature of things, by showing that you, you yourself, are commissioned to do all these things by a living authority which men are bound to obey—for, certainly, you cannot claim that you, individually, have received this authority directly from God.

If you cannot lay claim to such an authority—if you say, for instance, that there is no living authority on earth above individual men—what then, is your "exhorting, entreating, and rebuking,"—be it said with all respect—but an impertinence? Are you not like those men who said: "The Lord saith, whereas the Lord hath not sent them" (Ezech. xiii. 6).

When we consider that some kind of living teacher or authority in matters of religion is necessary to every society that claims to be a religious body in any sense; and moreover, that to a body which professes to have dogma and sacraments, that is to be the bearer of any distinct and complete message from God to man, such a living teacher is necessary in a far higher sense, since, without one, there could never be defined dogma, or sacraments which could be used; when we consider this, is there not an overwhelming antecedent probability that our Lord did institute a living authority, and that one of its most essential duties was to be a teacher?

When, on the other side, you find that our Lord did, *in fact*, entrust to His apostles such a power, with a promise of



continuity in the plainest words ; that our Lord said to them : " Going, therefore, teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world " (St. Matt. xxviii. 19), and, " He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me " (St. Luke x. 16), and, " If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican " (St. Matt. xviii. 17)—when you find all this to be the case, is it not plain and evident that our Lord established His Church to be a permanent, living teacher to men, and all this was one of her primary offices ?

To this proof, which is in itself so powerful, we must add that, as an obvious matter of history, there always has been a Church formally claiming to teach, and that, until the last few centuries, there never was a dissentient voice. I mean that everybody agreed that "the Church" was a divinely appointed religious teacher, however much people might differ as to which really *was* the Church. Heretical bodies tried to claim the authority of the true Church, and taught false doctrine, but they always taught that the Church of Christ had power to teach, and they *did* teach, to the best of their power.

It seems unnecessary to dwell so long on the teaching power of the Church, which every one, you will say, admits. I think, however, that a great many people forget it in practice, when they talk about the Church. They do not realize that if there is a Church at all, it must be a teaching body : they are willing enough themselves to teach others, but do not appreciate that they can only be justified as teachers of religion by being

representatives of a Teaching Body—and that, in consistency, they must have themselves been taught, by such a divinely commissioned body, before they can venture to teach others.

The Church, then, must essentially be a teacher, but not merely such a teacher as the leader of a philosophical school might be. She was never meant to be a mere professor, but to be a Teacher “as one having power.” She claims not only to teach, but to insist upon her teaching; not merely to deliver abstract doctrines, but to guide and rule all those committed to her charge, and lead them on in all things that concern their salvation.

This is clearly conveyed in the commission given to her: “Teach all nations . . . *commanding* them to observe” —“Reprove, entreat, *rebuke*”—“Wherefore rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in faith” (Titus i. 13). “To rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased by His own Blood,” that is what *teaching* means in the Holy Scripture. It must, indeed, be so, for our Lord’s Church was to be a kingdom: “I dispose unto you, as My Father hath disposed unto Me a Kingdom” (St. Luke xxii. 29). The very idea of a kingdom implies rule and command, and as there is to be a spiritual kingdom, there must be spiritual power. So again, the Church is to be a fold; the faithful are to be our Lord’s flock, and are “to go in and to go out and to find pasture,” and this idea again implies duly appointed spiritual leaders. “Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.” The expression “Feed My flock,” means also “Rule My flock”; indeed, of temporal rulers, *feed* or *be shepherd*, was often taken as synonymous with “be ruler over.”

If such a thing as legitimate spiritual authority exists at all, it is clear that such spiritual authority must exist primarily in some body to which our Lord committed it, and must be exercised by delegation from that body. If no such authority has been given, no spiritual authority can now be lawfully exercised. You may lawfully advise and entreat, but if you attempt to rebuke or rule in spiritual things, you are clearly tyrannical if no such power has ever been committed to you.

I think then that every one who believes our Lord established a Church at all, will, on consideration, be obliged to admit that in addition to her primary office of witness to the whole world, the Church must essentially have the office of teacher and ruler (in spiritual things) of all Christ's people. If she is not established for this purpose, for what on earth can she be designed! Can any one point to any other object of her existence which does not include these offices?

If these are the very objects for which she was established, it is plain that she must be so constituted and organized as to enable her to carry them out. No one would venture to say that our Lord established a Church and made her in such a manner as to be incapable of doing the very thing for which she was made.

If, then, we want to find out the Church of God, we must look out for a body which has qualities fitting to teach men with Divine authority. Let us now consider what these qualities are. I think everybody will admit, in the first place, that such a body must be aware of its own character. It must itself know that it has this commission to teach men, and not be afraid to say so plainly. If it



does not know this primary fact of its own commission, what else is it likely to know? if it does not know it itself, it is absurd to suppose that any one else can know it. Can any one, for instance, imagine the apostles not knowing that they were apostles, and not venturing to claim that character? Can you fancy St. Paul not knowing whether he had authority to teach or not? This, then, is the first mark of the Church's commission: if she has this power to teach, she must be conscious of the fact, and proclaim it to the world.

Then it is equally clear that she must have such an organization as to enable her to communicate her knowledge to men. A deaf and dumb professor certainly would not be of much use: he might have any other qualities you please, any amount of excellence and learning, but every one would say he was not qualified to teach. So we see that the very first gift of our Lord to His Church was the gift of tongues: "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak" (Acts ii. 4). Was not this emblematical of the Church's mission? she was to speak to all nations, not merely naturally, but "as the Holy Ghost gave her to speak."

But mere physical capacity is not enough for a teacher, though it is an essential; it must be accompanied by the moral and intellectual qualities necessary for exercising the gift of speech. A teacher is one who explains, and makes his subject clear to his hearers: one who is able and willing to dispose of difficulties as they occur. This is exactly the difference between a book and a teacher; a book states a proposition, and if you cannot understand

it for yourself as put before you, you can get no farther ; whereas a teacher is supposed to be able to enter into your difficulties, and make the subject plain to you. Moreover, one who undertakes to be the teacher of a multitude must be ready to meet the intellectual capacity of all. He must be ready with elementary instruction for beginners, and with higher teaching for the more advanced.

A Church appointed by God as a teacher for mankind must have the capacity for doing all this. She must make her message clear to men. It is not enough to lay down a form of words ; she must also be ready to explain these words, and answer the difficulties which arise concerning their meaning. She has hearers of all capacities, "Greeks and barbarians," ignorant savages, and nations of every degree and quality of civilization. She has simple peasantry to teach, and also the most refined, intellectual, and fastidious classes of men. She must be qualified to teach them all according to their several capacities. St. Paul says : "To the Greeks and to the barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise, I am a debtor" (Rom. i. 14).

Then, again, if she is a teacher appointed by Christ, she must be confident in her own knowledge and resolute in demanding acquiescence. "For there shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and will indeed turn their hearing from the truth, but will be turned into fables" (2 Tim. iv. 3). What is the appointed teacher to do when this time comes? Is he to give it up, and let them do their own way? No. "Be thou vigilant, labour in all things, do

the work of an evangelist, *fulfil thy ministry.*" What is the duty of one individual teacher is, *a fortiori*, the duty of a great body appointed by Christ, not over one flock, but over the world. It must teach and explain, but it must also be confident, resolute, and unswerving.

But, as I have said before, it is not enough merely to teach as a Professor; the teaching office given by our Lord involves the duty of shepherd. The teaching body, therefore, must be able to show that it has, first, the commission, and then both the power and the will to look after the sheep. It must show that it has the instinct and the capacity to rule, that it is so organized as to enable it to act as shepherd, and that, in fact, it does so now, and has done so in past times. It must care for all peoples and ranks. Our Lord says, "I know Mine, and Mine know Me;" and any body which professes to be a shepherd in His place, and appointed by Him, must show signs of this pastoral zeal and solicitude, and show that it has power to exert this zeal with practical effect. If it can be said of it that it hath "no care of the sheep," it stands convicted of not being the shepherd that "entereth by the door," but the hireling that climbeth up another way, whose own the sheep are not. So, then, energy and success in preaching the Gospel to the nations, and in looking after and teaching the poor, may well be considered as one of the most conclusive signs of being the teacher sent by God to mankind.

I now come to the application of the principles I have been laying down. The result of them is this; there is *one* body on the face of the earth which has the characteristics of a divinely appointed teacher—and only one. The



Roman Church can show in the most distinct manner each one of these qualities, and every other body most signally fails to do so.

In the first place she feels, knows, and proclaims her own authority as teacher. I think every one will admit this. People may, and do, call the Church's claims a usurpation and audacious presumption, or anything else they like, but they cannot deny that she has always spoken and acted as if fully conscious of a Divine commission. Even in the worst times, whatever popes and bishops may have been individually, the moment they were called upon to speak the Spirit of the Lord was upon them, and their words were words of zeal and piety, to guide, instruct, and direct the faithful throughout the world.

It is not too much to say that scarcely a year goes by without some special teaching from the central authority addressed to the Church, and not a day passes without some reference to this central authority from those engaged in teaching the world. Day and night, over the surface of the globe, is this great work of teaching continued, always under the vigilant and unrelaxing control of the Roman Church. There never was a teacher, there never could be a teacher, who was more deeply conscious of a special commission than the Roman Church is; there never was one who acted more consistently on this consciousness.

No one can doubt of her power to speak and to act. Every one through her vast communion knows where her voice is to be found, and to whom they must have recourse in difficulties. To whom must they apply? There is no doubt or difficulty, no need for long con-

sideration. Bishops, priests, and laity, all listen to one voice, and that voice is supreme over all ranks.

Here, indeed, is a teaching, and the teaching "of one having power." It is a teaching which settles all difficulties as they arise, a teaching decided, resolute, and unwavering, which never temporizes, and which exacts obedience from all alike. It is a teaching, moreover, suited to all capacities; it knew how to supply the wants of newly converted barbarians, as well as the men of the older civilization, and now it knows how to provide for the simple and ignorant, as well as to meet the demands of modern science. None of the Church's children can say that they are above her teaching, and none that they are too insignificant to be thought of.

It is not, as I have said, a mere teaching, but an incessant and watchful rule, the true care of a shepherd over the flock. "My daily instance, the solicitude for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire?" (2 Cor. xi. 28). Such is the account St. Paul gives of his pastoral care; does it not apply just as well, at this moment, to the Apostolic See? Is not that See doing for the whole world what St. Paul then did for the comparatively small body of Christians around him? How many nations have been brought into the fold of Christ by the immediate care of that Holy See, as our own country was, by missionaries sent directly by the Supreme Authority? How many Churches consolidated, how many hierarchies established throughout the world?

Over the whole Church missionaries go forth, and have done so from the beginning. The very time when the

Church was undergoing the fiercest attacks at home—the time of the Reformation, when it seemed to men that the last hour was come—that time of trial was also the time of her most brilliant missionary triumphs, when new worlds were subdued by St. Francis Xavier and a host of saintly apostles. Even those who least like the Roman Church, cannot deny either her energy, her devotedness, or her success in the field of missionary labour. No one can say that she is not truly a “teacher of men.”

You may say, if you will, that you do not think her teaching true, but that is nothing to the present argument. In the nature of things, the scholars are not the judges as to whether the teaching to which they listen is correct. They can very well judge whether their teacher is competent to teach; whether he is able to answer questions and settle difficulties; whether he is familiar with his subject and at home in it; whether he is confident and decided and consistent with himself; but they are not competent judges of the truth of the doctrine he lays down. If they were able to judge of the correctness of his teaching, it is clear that they would not require any teacher at all.

I think, then, that no one will deny that the Roman Church has every essential characteristic that a teacher ought to have, and that her history and demeanour correspond exactly with the claim she makes, to be a teacher appointed by God.

Now let us turn to her rivals and ask what they have to say for themselves, and what claims they can make good. What does the Church of England claim for herself? Does she, too, claim to be a teacher sent by God to the world?



Listen to the statement of her claim : " As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred, so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith. The Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith, and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so, besides the same, ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation.

" General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of princes. And when they be gathered together (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God) they may err and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture." " Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." (Articles xix. xx. xxi. vi.)

Can any one honestly say that this is the programme, the claim, of a teacher feeling himself to be appointed by God? Other Churches have failed before—General Councils may err—and therefore (by implication) I may err too! Such

a very modest claim! "Authority in controversies of Faith"—only, I must leave it to my scholars to say whether I am right or not: I refer to another authority, and if I make a mistake in explaining that, my scholars must set me right! Did any teacher ever yet begin with such an announcement? And has the Church of England ever claimed a power to teach in any bolder tone? I never heard of it. Plenty of individuals within her communion have, no doubt, made such a claim, and make it every day with startling audacity; but, as a corporate body, she makes no claim except in this most feeble and hesitating style. She never says, "It seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us," as the Apostolic Church said: far from her such temerity!

We cannot, then, be surprised to find an Archbishop of Canterbury saying to a correspondent: "You ask me whether you are to conclude that you ought not to teach, and have not authority of the Church to teach any of the doctrines spoken of in your five former questions, in the dogmatical terms there stated? To which I reply: Are they contained in the Word of God? St. Paul says, 'Preach the Word.' . . . Now, whether the doctrines concerning which you inquire are contained in the Word of God, and can be proved thereby, you have the same means of discovering as myself, and I have no special authority to declare." \* These words, from the highest ecclesiastical authority of the Church of England, seem a satisfactory and sufficient comment on the claim made by that Church to be the teacher sent by Christ to mankind.

\* Archbishop Sumner to Mr Maskell — quoted from Newman's "Anglican Difficulties," p. 8.

But, as I said, a teacher must at least be able to speak. He must at least have a voice of some sort. What is the organ of the Church of England? Does anybody know? It is clear the Archbishop of Canterbury does not think he is, and I am afraid everybody would agree with him, however else they might differ. If, for instance, the Archbishop were to issue a dogmatic decree to-morrow—say, on the Holy Eucharist—I suppose no human being would consider himself bound, either in law or in conscience, to pay any attention to it, or think then that the question was in any way settled. The Queen is said to be the Head of the Church, and yet no one would think himself at all bound by her personal opinion. The Arches Court, the Privy Council, an Act of Parliament, would each decide in its own way, and be obeyed exactly as far as the civil power enforced the decision; but does any one pretend that any one of these is the voice of the Church of England, speaking as a divinely-appointed teacher, and appealing to the consciences of men with an authority professing to come from God?

It is sometimes supposed that Convocation represents the Church of England, and may be considered to be its voice. We must first consider, however, that there *is* no Convocation of the Church of England; there are *two* Convocations, that of Canterbury, and that of York, and these are in no way connected, and have no common voice. Moreover, Convocation “differs in constitution, and the purport for which it is summoned, from an ordinary Provincial Council, whereas the purport of an ordinary Provincial Council is to consult on matters which concern the faith or peace of the Church, the Convocations are



called together to treat of matters which concern the Crown, and the security and defence of the Church of England, and the tranquillity, public good, and defence of the realm itself." This appears from the very wording of the writ summoning the Convocation, which is now identical in purport with the writ of 1283.

Convocation goes back, apparently, to the time of Edward I., when the clergy established the right of meeting together to tax themselves, by voting "benevolences" to the King. It seems very clear that the meeting, though a meeting of clergy, was a secular meeting, for secular purposes, and did not at all represent the spiritual voice of the Church. It was the Third Estate, with the nobles, and Commons, called together to advise the Crown, and particularly to vote money. Henry VIII. made them declare that Convocation "is, always has been, and ought to be summoned by authority of a Royal writ," and its resolutions only become law by Royal patent.

Convocation was prorogued in 1717, "in pursuance of a Royal writ, from which time until 1861, no license from the Crown has been granted to proceed to business." The practice during this time was for a few members to meet at the beginning of each Parliament to choose a Prolocutor of the Lower House, and then to be prorogued without proceeding to business ("Encycl. Brit.").

It seems impossible to consider that two assemblies, called together originally for secular purposes, completely under the authority of the secular Government, liable to be silenced at any moment, and which have, in fact, been completely silenced for one hundred and forty years, can represent the spiritual teaching voice of the Church. I

conclude, therefore, that the Church of England has *no* voice, or at any rate, no organ of speech independent of the civil power.

Does the Church of England teach at all? We can best answer that question by looking at the state of her people. What are the effects of her teaching—if she does teach? Does she show any power of explaining her doctrine to her scholars when they are in doubt? Is she able to settle difficulties and controversies as they rise? If we want to know, we have nothing to do but look round us. Every town, almost every village, gives us the same answer, that the Church of England is not one religion, but a number of different and antagonistic creeds, each professing to be *the* Creed of the Church of England. It is difficult to see how any reasonable man can deny this. Can any one possibly maintain, for instance, that two people have the same religion, whereas one believes the Holy Eucharist to be the true Body of Christ, whilst the other blasphemes and scoffs at the doctrine? or, if one believes in Confession and priestly absolution, whereas the other considers the exercise of such a power to be a sacrilegious assumption? If one professes to believe in the authority of a living Church, in a priesthood and a sacramental system, whilst the other cares for neither Church nor Sacrament, but talks of “the Bible alone”—can any one say they have the same religion?

This is exactly the case in the Church of England. Everywhere you will find people who hold, or think they hold, almost the whole Catholic doctrine, and plenty, on the other hand, whose doctrine is Lutheranism, or Calvinism, or whose doctrine does not, in any appreciable

respect, differ from that of the Dissenters. To be sure, the first say freely that those who are so deficient in "Church doctrine," should be summarily ejected from the Church, and that they would be so if they had their way, and the bishops did their duty: but then the others retort that their opponents are traitors, Papists in disguise, and a great many other unpleasant things.

And what does the Church of England do all this time? Nothing—absolutely nothing. It is impossible for any human being to ascertain what the Church of England thinks on these subjects now—probably because she does not think about them at all; and we can only surmise by critical examination of documents, three hundred years old, what the people who then lived, or some of them, thought on these subjects. Such being the case, can any one seriously speak of the Church of England as a teaching Church? and yet, I do not think that any one can fairly deny the accuracy of my description.

But now let us ask what account can be given of the action of the Church of England as ruler and shepherd, as distinguished from her work as teacher. I am afraid she shows the same character of absolute incapacity in both spheres of action. I do not think any one can read the history of that Church's dealing with the poor at home, and consider it as a success, taking it impartially during the last three centuries; nor can she claim to have done much in the missionary field abroad. Her time has not been long on earth, and her sphere practically, if not theoretically, is limited to the British possessions; but how little has she done even in that sphere? I think any one who has read the doings of the Church of England—in India, for instance—



during the last century, will admit that she cannot lay much claim to success as shepherd of Christ's sheep.

Canon Taylor, in an article in the "Fortnightly Review," October, 1888, says: "In the Bombay Presidency, 92.7 per cent. of the native Christians are said to be Roman Catholics. In Travancore, after seventy years' labour, only 3.3 per cent. are claimed by the Church of England, and 90 per cent. by the Church of Rome." Again, he says, speaking of the report of Mr Squires: "Strange to say, the existence of so many Christians is a great hindrance to the spread of Christianity! Mr Squires, with his 97 assistants, baptized last year 35 adults and 92 children, at a cost of £9,441, 7s. 1d., and the converts made by his society, after 66 years of labour, do not amount to 2,000, while the devoted Roman priests are converting, educating, and consoling thousands at a nominal cost, which comes, not from any wealthy society, but mainly from the converts themselves. No wonder Mr Squires is jealous of his successful rivals." Again he says: "In spite of the prodigal expenditure of the Protestant societies, three-fourths of the native Christians in India are descendants of the converts of the early Jesuits. In those districts where Xavier laboured, 90 per cent. of the native Christians are Roman Catholics. In Travancore alone, there are half a million of them, twice as many as the two Church of England societies can claim in the whole of Africa and Asia."

These are the words, not of a Catholic, but of a member of the Church of England, and he, indeed, is only saying what has been many times said before. Can anything show more plainly the utter feebleness of that Church as regards

missionary labour? Whatever she may be, she cannot reach the hearts of the heathen. It is not that her children are wanting in zeal or devotedness, but she is not the "fold of Christ," she cannot speak with the voice of "the shepherd of the sheep," and the sheep, therefore, do not hear her voice.

I should be very sorry to deny that there has been, and is now, a great deal of missionary zeal both at home and abroad, but it is zeal in the Church of England, and not of it. You have at the present day examples of most edifying activity by both High Church and Low Church clergymen. Each has his own style of missionising—one side speaking of Church authority, of ecclesiastical celebrations and the sacraments, as far as they can venture; the other, reading chapters and issuing tracts of the "Are you saved?" description, and generally adopting a style not easily to be distinguished from that of the Salvation Army. But, what says the Church of England? How does she direct the evangelizing and shepherding of her sheep? She says nothing. She has not a word of direction to give; each one may, and must, do his own way; whatever is done in her, is not her doing, but the work of individuals.

What can the clergy of the Anglican Church do as representatives of the Church of England? What weapons does she put into their hands when she sends them out to the poor and to the heathen, to the sick and pestilence-stricken? What can they do which any one else cannot do just as well? I should be sorry to deny that they often exhibit great zeal, self-denial, and much kindness and sympathy, but what can they do? They can read a chapter of the Bible, or some prayers for the sick; so can any one else, or the patient himself. They can tell

him what they suppose to be the meaning of the Scripture, and the doctrines of the Church of England ; so also can any one else. They can *not* teach as "one having power," because they have nothing but their own opinion to rely on ; they can *not* hear the penitence and forgive the sins of those who are borne down by iniquity ; they can *not* give the Body of the Lord as a Viaticum, to prepare terrified souls for their last sad journey before the judgment-seat of God ; they have no Sacrament of Extreme Unction to strengthen body and soul, and give special preparation for the hour of death. They can do just as much as any layman, and no more.

To be sure they can administer "Holy Communion" ; yes, but can they tell what it means ? They know the Church of England declares that "Transubstantiation . . . is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture," and that "the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was *not* by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped" (Art. xxvii.) ; and they also know that by the great majority of the Church of England, it has been considered, and is still considered, as simply bread and wine taken in memory of Christ, although perhaps they, individually, may think it something more.

When people are dying, they do not want any mere uncertainties of this kind, and are not likely to care much about a clergy who cannot profess, with any approach to certainty, to do anything more than any neighbour can do for them.

So it is with the heathen. They want teachers who know what they have to teach, and have authority to teach it. Many of the Anglican clergy have plenty of



zeal, but they cannot teach, because they have never themselves been taught. If they can find a divinely appointed teacher to teach them, they may well hand on their teaching, but if the community to which they belong makes no pretence to teach, all that they can say is simply guess-work, and is not likely to produce any effect on the heathen.

If there is a Church at all appointed by our Lord, it must be so appointed in order to say something and do something worth saying and doing: "She must do that," says Cardinal Newman, "in order to have a meaning, which otherwise cannot be done; which she alone can do. She must have a benefit to bestow in order to be worth her existence; and the benefit must be a fact which no one can doubt about. It must not be an opinion, or matter of opinion, but a something which is like a first principle, which may be taken for granted, a foundation indubitable and irresistible. In other words, she must have a dogma and sacraments; it is a dogma and sacraments, and nothing else, which can give meaning to a Church, or sustain her against the State" ("Anglican Difficulties," p. 179).

The Church of England *cannot* teach, and so can have no dogma, and, as sacraments essentially require teaching, she can have no available sacraments. This it is that accounts for her utter dependence on the State, and her incapacity to attempt the part of guide and ruler of Christ's sheep.

This is well illustrated by the two Pan-Anglican synods which have been held in our own time. You had great assemblies collected of all the available representatives of

the Church of England and other Protestant episcopal bodies ; all sorts of weighty and difficult questions pressed on them for decision, and what did they decide? Nothing. There was not an attempt at an authoritative decision about anything. They hazarded a few gentle "suggestions" and pious remarks, and that was all. They did not feel themselves to have power to do more than suggest, and, as far as I know, their suggestions were considered, by those to whom they were addressed, to have about as much binding authority as the opinions of any other collection of intelligent gentlemen—say the Society of Antiquaries—would have. What a contrast to the teaching of the Catholic Church!

But you will perhaps say : I do not consider the Church of England to be the Church of God in itself, but merely as a part of that great general Church which is found all over the world, that is, you fall back on that still more hazy idea of a Church, that "vast body extending through East and West," etc., of which Dr. Mahan and others speak. But surely this only increases the difficulty. If the Church of England has few traces of the essential conditions of a Church, this "vast body" has none : if it is hard to make out the Church of England to be either witness, teacher, or shepherd, it is impossible to do so with this supposed Church. The one thing known about the "Church," in this sense of the word, is that it has neither organs nor voice of any kind ; that it cannot possibly speak, and cannot possibly act.

The Church spoke and acted indeed in days past, but of those who spoke, and those who obeyed, not *one* ever considered the Church then acting to resemble the

imaginary body now talked of. It is indeed an absurdity to discuss the action of such a Church as witness, teacher, or guide, considering, as I before said, that at *least* nineteen-twentieths of her (supposed) members entirely deny her existence.

It seems hardly necessary to say much about the Eastern Churches, which are the only other possible rivals to the Roman Church. I think no one will deny that they have fallen into a state of complete stagnation and decay. What has become of the bond which united the Eastern Church into one whole, whilst it remained united to Rome? It is broken, and a series of independent national Churches has taken its place. What has become of the overflowing intellectual and dogmatic life by which it was formerly possessed? That, too, has perished. Instruction seems at the lowest ebb; teaching, pastoral care, religious discipline of priests or people, all seem to have disappeared. In the missionary world her name is unknown, and that great Church, which once did so much for the Christian world, now does little more than cumber the ground.

I now return to the question with which I began. What do you mean by a Church? It is idle and—may I add it?—disingenuous, to go on talking of Church and Church Authority, unless you really know what you mean by the words. Do you mean a corporate body instituted by our Lord, to carry out certain ends? amongst which must necessarily and primarily come the offices of witness to the world, and teacher and shepherd to God's people. If you do *not* mean this, what else do you mean; How else do you describe the character and office of Christ's Church?



Let us know what *you* consider its proper definition to be.

If you admit this account of the Christian Church, can you deny that the Roman Church does, in a most striking way, correspond with this definition? Can you deny that its present constitution and past history abundantly qualify it to be a witness of Christ to the world, and to be a teacher and guide to men? Can you deny that in fact she has accomplished this work for a thousand years, and is doing it still?

You may indeed say that there is much in the teaching and character of the Roman Church which you do not like. Of course there is. So long as a Church is made up of mortal and sinful men, so long as it resembles the net cast into the sea, including fishes good and bad, it will always include a certain amount of evil and scandal. There will always be weak points in the conduct both of pastors and people, at which those may take offence who are ready to do so. But, much more, and I pray you to take note of this, so long as you are outside the Church you never can be a fair or competent judge of her doctrines and practices. Take for an example the account Dr. Mahan gives of the bearing of the Catholic devotion to our Lady. I have no doubt that he means honestly, but what he says is simply an absurd caricature. So again about the Catholic belief in miracles, and the results which he supposes to follow from it. It is not wonderful: the world outside misunderstood the doctrines of the early Church still more grievously, and could never comprehend or enter into them until it was converted.

It is, indeed, remarkable how difficult it seems to be, for

those outside, to see the exact bearing and practical result of Catholic doctrines. This has been observed again and again with converts. With much study and anxious thought they find it hard to understand what seems obvious to every Catholic child, but when they become members of the Church, the difficulties and objections which seemed so formidable at once disappear. No one can be a better illustration of this than Cardinal Newman. With long and painful investigation he made his way to the Church, but, in spite of his intellect and wide reading, it was not till he was within her pale that he really appreciated those doctrines, which he has since so often and so powerfully defended.

You can see and enter into the broad external marks of the Catholic Church, her corporate union, her constant witness to the truth, her marvellous capacity for teaching : these things our Lord intended to be the marks by which men were to know her, and the attractions by which they were to be brought to her ; but you cannot understand or form a correct judgment about the message she brings to you from God. This must remain, to a certain extent, unknown and unappreciated till you become one of her children. What is this but saying that, however much you know, and however plain the way may have been made for you, you will always want faith and generosity before you can enter God's Church. Is not this exactly what our Lord meant when He said, "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of God"?

Can you put forward anything to contest this character of witness and teacher with the Church of Rome? I do

not think that any one, who really considers the subject, will be able to accept either the Church of England, or any, or all, of the Oriental Churches, still less that phantom and imaginary Church supposed to be made up of all Christian sects, as possessing the characteristics and attributes which our Lord's Church must necessarily have had. No one can really think that any of these Churches ever has performed, or has been in a condition to perform or is ever likely to perform, the work for which our Lord's Church must certainly have been designed. The choice, therefore, is between the Roman Church and nothing. I have a strong belief and expectation that those who really believe that our Lord did establish His Church on earth, will be led to see that this Church can only be the Church in communion with the See of Rome, if they will but consider carefully what they mean by a "Church," and what must of necessity have been the characteristics of that established by our Lord.

And now, to conclude this part of my work, I should like to ask all people who think seriously about religion : How do you suppose our Lord intended His truth to be taught to mankind? Do you think that He meant that each individual should find out the truth for himself? If so, would it have been possible for men to come to any settled belief whatever? If Almighty God meant to give us any accurate means of knowing the truth, can you point out any way that we can imagine except by establishing a permanent teaching authority on earth—that is to say, a Church?

If you believe in a Church at all, what do you mean by the term? Have you any definition of it in your own mind?



Is it not true that to be a Church in any sense worth talking about, it must be a living organized body of men—continued and propagated from age to age? Is it not true that such a body must at all times be able to act as a witness and teacher of men, with power and authority from God to teach and guide men? If so, can you point to any body on earth, except the Roman Church, which is able to do this, and in fact does this?

It is idle to waste time upon secondary considerations until you have come to some conclusion on this fundamental question.

## CHAPTER IV

### A SINGLE INFALLIBILITY

Childlike faith—An accurate balance—"Counterpoise to Infallibility"—"The tutored ear"—Divine faith and miracles—"Intellectual cobwebs"—"Spiritual honesty"—"Juiceless pastures"—"Single Infallibility"—"Mere verbal consistence"—Galileo—Teacher and Judge—Karl von Gebler.

**I**N the preceding chapters, I have endeavoured to establish the paramount claims of the Roman Church: I have tried to show that she alone has those attributes and qualities which a community must possess, if it is to be called the Church of Christ in any sense worth talking about.

Unfortunately, people in general cannot bring themselves to go to the root of the question, but prefer arguing on minor points. They have heard certain objections and difficulties, and on these they dwell in controversy. It is generally easy enough to find objections against any system, particularly if your knowledge of it is not very accurate, and these objections prevent people from seeing the force of arguments which would otherwise convince them.

Our High Church friends, accordingly, can find plenty of objections to what they term the "Roman System." Objections—doctrinal, critical, and historical—with some-

thing or other that looks like a foundation, can be found in any age and country if you look for them; and these objections supply material for an unending controversy.

Anglicans are very often contented with putting these difficulties forward, and then they think they have done enough. They do not consider it necessary to explain their own position, and to tell us what they believe about the Church, and why they believe it. Still less do they feel called upon, it would seem, to answer the very obvious difficulties their own system presents.

Nothing can be more unsatisfactory than perpetually answering objections, and when you have finished, you generally find that you have made no progress whatever. Nevertheless, it is important to go into objections carefully, and meet them as fully as possible, as, otherwise, they are likely to keep many people from seeing the real points in debate.

For this reason I devote the second part of my book to the work of answering some of the objections made against the Catholic Church.

The points I am going to consider are taken from Dr. Mahan's "*Exercise of Faith*." \* This is a book which was at one time pretty well known, but is now somewhat forgotten. The objections, however, are well put, and, generally, in a kindly spirit; and there is, besides, more attempt at re-construction than is generally to be seen.

The writer is not content with finding fault with the "*Roman Theory*," but really endeavours to give some idea of what he himself thinks the Church ought to be.

\* "*The Exercise of Faith : A book for doubters*," by the late Rev. Milo Mahan, Professor of Ecclesiastical History, New York. English Edition. 1877.



He thinks that some position can be found between authoritative teaching and private judgment. He strongly objects to what he considers the arbitrary and peremptory teaching of the Catholic Church—but he also objects to the “lawlessness of private judgment,” and he fancies he can find a permanent resting-place between the two theories.

He begins by objecting to what he calls a “single infallibility.” Faith, he thinks, ought not to rest an obedience to teaching only, but ought to be found by weighing the testimony of all our faculties and comparing them together, so that the “threefold testimony of heart, mind, and soul” may make “a triple cord of witnesses which is not easily broken.” This view he considers to be supported by the words of St. Peter and of St. Paul. Moreover, he thinks that the effect of proclaiming the infallibility of one authority is to corrupt the very source of all knowledge.

By way of supporting this view, he makes some rather disagreeable attacks on Catholics—to which it is desirable to reply. The rest of his objections will, I hope, be sufficiently plain from the answers I make to these.

He begins by comparing the belief which a little child has in what its parents tell it,—a belief which is afterwards supplemented and corrected by knowledge gathered from other sources,—with the faith which Christians have in the Church.

1. There is indeed an analogy, but this analogy only serves to bring out the distinction more clearly. A child has, at first, an undoubting, instinctive, faith in its parents, and then, as its faculties develop, its intelligence points out that its parents cannot be the ultimate authority. It must

see that they make no pretence to any special commission or means of knowledge which is not common to all around, itself included ; that the subject-matter of their teaching is, as a rule, to be ascertained by experience ; and, finally, that it would, on the face of it, be absurd to imagine that thousands of people, all placed in a position similar to that of his parents, can all be infallible : and therefore, whilst he continues with increasing faculties to respect his parents, he does so, subject to the teaching of other authorities. With regard to the teaching of the Church, the Christian begins also with an instinctive, unreflecting belief, but, as his faculties enlarge, he comes to see intellectually that if it be the Church of God, appointed by him to teach men, it *must* be the ultimate authority. He will see that it has, and must have, a unique position amongst men, and, by the very force of that position, it *must* be infallible as to all the things it is appointed to teach. That faith, therefore, which was instinctive to begin with, as the understanding matures, changes—always with the assistance of God's grace—to faith resting on more intellectual grounds, in which all the powers of the mind have a part.

As for testing and confirming the teaching of the Church by bringing in other witnesses, there is abundant opportunity for doing so, in the sense of studying to see how the truth taught you by God in one way, corresponds, or tallies, if I may say so, with what He teaches in another.

In the sense, however, of testing to see whether the Church is teaching you truly or not, it is plain that if you are competent to pronounce it to be wrong, it is no divinely appointed guide at all.

2. I next proceed to the rather strange idea, suggested by

Dr. Mahan that the Christian's soul is to be like a perfectly accurate balance into which different weights may be cast ; which is faithfully to proclaim the preponderance of weight, by the side to which it inclines. Does Dr. Mahan really consider this to represent faith? If you have a slight preponderance of weight, for example, in favour of our Lord's Divinity, and are aware (as in such a case you clearly would be) that to-morrow the scale may turn the other way, can you be said to have any faith in our Lord's Divinity? I think the very simile refutes itself more strongly than anything I could say.

But our author says we are to use all our faculties, and to be "sceptical about none of them," so as to make them a triple cord of witnesses. Here we come to the grand fallacy which runs through the whole book. The author speaks as if, according to the Catholic system, it were necessary to shut out this witness or the other ; to neglect this or that faculty or means of knowledge ; to let the understanding slumber, and to remain uneducated ; and then he fails to see that he is simply begging the question all the time ! If the Church is really what she professes to be, a guide appointed by God, and the message she teaches is a true one, why should we be obliged to shut our eyes, neglect witnesses, and so forth ? It is plain then that he assumes that the Church is not such a guide, and that her teaching is not true. Once grant that, and obviously there is nothing more to argue about.

3. The next point is one which to me appears very conclusive—though, I am afraid, not as the author would wish. I would willingly rest the whole controversy on it. He says the apostles "created," in the very nature of the case, a



kind of counterpoise to the weight of their own infallibility (p. 10), and quotes the passage, "If an angel from Heaven," etc. Does Dr. Mahan really mean to say that if St. Paul had taught the Corinthians (for example) any doctrine, it would have been open to them to answer, "We will not receive your teaching because of such a passage in your first Epistle"?

If, on his own showing, his present and his past doctrine did not agree, the logical result might be that he was not to be believed at all. It might be that he had never had the commission to teach, or that he had been deprived of it, and was no longer an Apostle of God—but to say that he had "the weight of his infallibility" on both occasions, yet was not to be allowed to know the meaning of his own words previously uttered, is certainly a remarkable view of the case. It seems likewise a strange interpretation of St. Peter's words, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed," to make it mean that his hearers were to judge of the truth of the doctrine he had taught to them by its correspondence with the prophecies, and that, indeed, the prophecies furnished a surer means than his own words.

Surely, if St. Peter and St. Paul were the Apostles of God, they must have been perfectly aware that their doctrine was true, and was in agreement with the "prophetical word," and that it never could be otherwise; and therefore that it must have been quite unnecessary for their followers to test it, and that any interpretations of Scripture not in accordance with their teaching must necessarily be false.

They would have put the Scriptures freely and without fear into the hands of their disciples, as "profitable for

doctrine, for reproof, for correction," but certainly not that their disciples might test the truth of their teaching or find a "counterpoise to the weight of their infallibility." The only thing that would make them hesitate to put Holy Scripture before all men, would be the fear lest "the unlearned and unstable should wrest them to their own destruction" (2 St. Peter iii. 16). This is precisely how the Catholic Church acts now, and has always acted.

4. Dr. Mahan goes on to make the assertion that the Holy Ghost enables the "well-balanced soul" to strike a balance of all the different testimonies presented to it, and to "catch the air which runs like a silver thread through all" the sounds it hears. Does Dr. Mahan mean to say that the Holy Ghost enables every "well-balanced mind" (that is, I suppose, every conscientious seeker after truth) to take the same view of faith that he himself takes? for instance, the views that he himself has of the Church, or of the Holy Eucharist?—or does he mean that the Holy Ghost has taught people to take a number of different views? or that one view is as good as another?

It is difficult to say which opinion is the most appalling. I believe there are some sects of Dissenters who maintain that God must enable all who honestly look for the truth, to find it in the Bible, and therefore that all who do not there find the truth, *i.e.*, their own particular religious opinions, are, *ipso facto*, condemned; but I should hardly have supposed that Dr. Mahan would have taken a similar line, and yet, I think, he would hardly venture to deny that a very large proportion of the Christian world thinks differently from himself.

It is all very well, and very pretty, to talk about the "air

which like a silver thread " runs through the confusion : but *is* there an air which can be detected by the " tutored ear "—that is, which a mind, however well disposed, can find for itself without some external guidance ? I think all experience is against it.

I now come to the objections to the Roman theory of making faith depend on one infallible authority. Here, again, is conspicuous the fallacy which, as I before said, runs through the whole argument.

If an authority is really appointed by Almighty God to tell men what is the truth—what can be more absurd than talking about "absolute dogmatic despotism," or "will-worship," or the "credulous ear," or being "not guided, but driven" ?

If your guide is really showing you the right way, and telling you how to avoid pitfalls and precipices, what is the good of talking in this way ?

Of course if you assume that the guide is an impostor, and has no right to lead, and is telling you all wrong, then such language is intelligible ; but that is, obviously, begging the question. It is quite conceivable, at any rate, that God should have appointed one definite authority to guide men. You may prove, if you can, that He has not done so in fact : but it is plain that if He has, all these objections fall to the ground, so they can have no weight in them.

But, says Dr. Mahan, Catholics must in practice receive the statements of their pastors about matters of fact—and "how are the little ones to distinguish ?" (p. 21.)

All this is a complete misunderstanding founded on the original error of supposing that Catholics may not use their wits, and are obliged, not only to hear the authoritative



teaching of the Church, but to believe whatever any priest tells them on any subject. "How are the little ones to distinguish!" They must be very little ones indeed if they have any difficulty about it. Matters of doctrine are taught as things revealed by God and decided by the Church—they are learned in every Catechism from childhood upwards—they are explained and enforced by every priest, and they have duties of one kind or other, constantly connected with them. Facts, or supposed facts, such as miracles not recorded in Scripture, and so forth, on the other hand, are not taught as revealed by God, but as human history, depending for credit on evidence; they are not taught as part of religious education, but told in some pious books, or given by some individual priest as an illustration of well known truths, or to enforce some devout sentiment, and above all have, generally speaking, no religious duties dependent on them. Is it possible for people to be so simple as to confuse between such different things? Certainly I never heard of their doing so.

At any rate it is plain that if religion is to be taught at all, there must always be the same danger. If faith is to come "by hearing," it is always possible for the simple to confuse between what is part of the preacher's mission, and what is his private opinion. You may, of course, take the line of saying that Protestants are more intelligent than Catholics, and do not run the same risk; that however, is, naturally, a matter of opinion. But St. Thomas Aquinas says: *Falsum non posse subesse fidei*. I cannot here quite follow the author's meaning. He cannot surely intend to bring under this axiom two classes of things which are "matters of faith," in a totally and widely different sense?

I mean things which are matters of Divine faith, and things which are only of human opinion. We will hope not, for logic's sake.

But the "Roman theory as expounded by recent writers" leads men to believe in fables. What on earth has the "Roman theory" to do with it? Is the writer under the impression that miracles are defined as matters of faith? if not, how can the Catholic doctrine of the way in which faith is to be defined affect them? Of course it is the old story. The writer assumes that people are obliged to shut their eyes in order to become Catholics (which, obviously, he can only do by assuming that the claim of the Catholic Church is an unfounded one), and proceeds to argue that they must therefore believe fables. We see "modern converts snared in the mazes of their own intellectual cobwebs, who suddenly become simple and believe in fables" (p. 17). This is a style of controversy which really is not worthy of Dr. Mahan. It comes pretty much to saying that your neighbours are fools, the moment they differ from you. Dr. Mahan begins by admitting of a number of converts that they are "intellectual, critical, and suspicious." Does it not occur to him that their view may possibly be the right one, or that there may be a good deal to say for it—or, at least, that the question cannot gracefully be got rid of merely by saying that they have "suddenly become simple?" At any rate, they have the advantage of a practical knowledge of the Catholic system, and have seen *both* sides of the question.

I now come to one of the passages which one would be glad to see expunged. It is not, however, Dr. Mahan, but an editor (apparently a Mr Hopkins) who is responsible for

it. The note to p. 17 speaks of Father Faber and the Oratorians in a tone which cannot but be considered offensive. It says; "In genuine childhood a certain credulity is graceful and becoming. But when a man gets down on all fours and tries to play child, it excites only a feeling of disgust." And this he says, because they appear to believe certain miracles. It would be interesting to know the intellectual line this gentleman takes. With infidels it is plain enough. They assume—they do not really attempt to prove, but they assume—that miracles have never happened, and are impossible; and then, when their neighbours believe in miracles, or speak of them, they think it reasonable to adopt a tone of supercilious insolence, because, according to their theory, such miracles are impossible.

What is the theory of our over-zealous editor? He does not profess that miracles are impossible or have never happened. On the contrary, as a Christian, he fully believes that they have happened, times without number; and he does not pretend to have a shred of proof that they may not happen at the present day. He cannot deny that our Lord says; "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these he shall do" (St. John xiv. 12); and he does not appear to have troubled himself at all about the proofs of the alleged miracles. What, then, is the ground for the superb contempt which his zeal leads him to express for his neighbours?

But in another note the same editor tells us that "these practical and popular impostures rot the tree of spiritual honesty clear down to the root."



If he thereby means that any one who imposes upon his neighbours, and deludes them by lying stories, "rots down to the root" his own honesty (such as he may have), I cordially agree with him : but if he means that an injury is done to the spiritual honesty of men by believing things to have happened which very well may have happened, but which, in fact, turn out to have been mistakes—I cannot think he is right.

If every time we believe a thing to be a fact, which afterwards turns out to be a fiction, an injury is done to our "spiritual honesty," I am afraid we must all be in a very bad way in this world. I do not think that mistaking fiction for fact is at all peculiar to Catholics.

"Intelligent Romanists," says Dr. Mahan, "may be as ready as the most incredulous Protestant to laugh at the simplicity of the lamb who is beguiled into feeding on such juiceless pasture. But, considered honestly, and with the slightest play allowed to that righteous indignation which no reverence for authority can keep from rising up in arms at the sight of systematic fraud, are not such things a stumbling-block to the faith of the little ones of Christ?" (p. 22).

It is rather a pity that our author's zeal would not allow him to pause to consider whether he has any sufficient ground for making this charge of "systematic fraud." It is the sort of charge which a conscientious man does not make without very good grounds, and here he has none except his own imagination. Does he really suppose that Catholics would have any difficulty in "rising up in arms at the sight of systematic fraud"? If so, we can only regret that he does not know a little more about us. He goes on

to draw a touching picture of the "lambs" on their "juiceless pasture," or in other words, of a Catholic population which has just heard a story of a miraculous event, which (we are to suppose) afterwards turns out not to have been a miracle at all. "No sooner do they hear the story than they pour in crowds from their homes and daily occupations. They begin perhaps a long and weary pilgrimage. They assemble in tumultuous excitement around the object of their devotion. And weeks, nay, months, are spent in a species of delirious joy, accompanied often with every kind of immorality, occasioned by faith in a thing which the authorities themselves at length pronounce to be a fable" (p. 23).

Let us put all this into a little less poetical form and endeavour to see the harm really done.

A Catholic population hears that a striking miracle has been worked in their neighbourhood. They know very well that God has worked many miracles, when the wants of men seem to need them. They know of no reason why He should not do so again; their own wants naturally appear very pressing, and they feel the need of something to encourage them: the evidence given appears to their minds sufficiently strong, and they believe the miracle.

What is the consequence? They are full of gratitude to God for having condescended to them. They look upon it as an encouragement and as a ray of light vouchsafed in a dark time. They go to the scene of the supposed miracle with great fervour (possibly to the detriment of their business), they pray a great deal, they go in procession, they hear many Masses, they confess their sins, and receive the sacraments, and, no doubt, receive many

spiritual graces in reward of their faith and prayer. Supposing the original miracle at last turns out a mistake, I do not see how the lambs are very much the worse, or that the pasture has been so juiceless, seeing it was prayer, devotion, and self-denial. Let us imagine it to be an impostor; I will join heartily with Dr. Mahan in condemning the impostor, and have not a word to say in defence of his "spiritual honesty," but still I cannot see how the lambs have been injured. What, however, I should like to know, has all this got to do with the "Roman rule of a single Infallibility"? Would not the people be just as easily deceived by false stories if the faith of the Church was to be settled by General Council? or by Convocation? or by Act of Parliament? I cannot quite see how the broad question of the rule of faith is affected by such considerations.

To conclude, Dr. Mahan says that faith is to be cautious, and to "seek no easy solution by eliminating one or more of the witnesses. It will listen to them all." I quite agree. We do not need to eliminate any of our faculties. We may and ought to use them all; in the first instance, to assure ourselves of the credibility and mission of the guide sent us by God, and afterwards, not, indeed, to test whether he is leading us astray, but to compare the truth as taught by our heavenly guide with the truth as it comes to us from other sources.

Dr. Mahan says that the Anglican Church answers questions about authority and private interpretation "explicitly enough for practical purposes." I am sorry that I cannot see what the answer is. The Church of England *seems* to be trying to say *yes* and *no* at the same time, and



after many eloquent words from Dr. Mahan, I cannot see that she commits herself to either yes or no. A "noble disdain of mere verbal consistency," may, very likely, be a mark of a "true Catholic mind," but one really would like to know on what principle a number of discordant ideas and opinions are to be brought into harmony.

It is no use saying that they ought to harmonise into "one air" like "a silver thread," when it is manifest to all men that they do not in fact do so. In these remarks I have omitted a good many points touched on. Some I hope, with the reader's indulgence, to treat of when considering the rest of Dr. Mahan's book, such as the analogy of the Jewish Church (p. 8), and the question of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints.

There are two things, however, for which I will ask a moment's attention.

First, what does the author mean by saying (p. 20), "It is said St. Bernard was a holy man : but St. Bernard devoted himself to the hyperdulia of the Blessed Virgin ; therefore it is argued, such worship cannot be mistaken." "It is argued"—who argues it? No Catholic would dream of saying anything of the sort. The opinions of holy men are of course to be respected, but no one imagines for a moment that they cannot be mistaken, as in fact very many saints have been mistaken. It is for the Church, not individual saints, to decide in cases of doubt.

The second point is that of Galileo (p. 19), in which his condemnation is brought forward as an objection to the Church's infallible authority in matters of doctrine. This case is, and I suppose will always remain, more or less of a difficulty to some minds, at any rate. As Cardinal

Newman says : " Here *exceptio probat regulam* ; for it is the stock argument." By this I mean that it is not easy to put the Catholic view of the question in such a shape as to clear away all difficulty.

The simple explanation seems to me to be this. There are, and must be, two distinct functions in the ruler of the Catholic Church. He is supreme teacher and supreme judge, and he acts differently in each capacity. For example, let us suppose some book to be brought before an ordinary ecclesiastical tribunal on a charge of heresy. How does that tribunal proceed ? It examines the decrees of Popes and councils, and considers how the doctrine of the book in question agrees with the wording of them. It hears what approved writers have to say on the subject. This proposition is generally said to be rash and presumptuous, the other is commonly considered heretical. In the same way the tribunal takes the Holy Scriptures, and asks : What is the interpretation commonly given to this or that passage by the Fathers and approved commentators ? In this way the doctrine of the book is discussed, and is pronounced orthodox or heretical as may be.

The case is appealed, and goes from tribunal to tribunal till it is brought before the highest, that of the Pope himself. How does *he* act ? On precisely the same principle as the inferior courts, I should say. His decision carries with it a greater authority, and is, in the nature of things, without appeal, but still it is, in kind, just like the decision of the inferior tribunals. The Pope is acting simply as supreme judge.

Now let us take another phase of the same or some

other question. There is a considerable difference of opinion amongst Catholic theologians; a strong and weighty school of writers is maintaining views which, at first sight, appear new; these writers contend that the question has never really been brought up and considered, and that their views are strictly consistent with the teaching of the Church. The question, let us suppose, assumes considerable proportions, and the Holy See is called upon to decide. Now the Pope decides on a totally different principle. He is now no longer the judge applying the ordinary laws and principles of the Church to a particular case, following commentators and approved writers, guided by precedent, and so forth. He is now speaking as authorized teacher of the Universal Church. He is now, in virtue of his office, deciding what is the teaching of the Church, because it may no longer be doubtful, and give an uncertain sound. He does so, using indeed all human means of information and counsel, but relying on the guiding power of the Holy Ghost, which has been secured to him in virtue of our Lord's promise to St. Peter.

Here we see, I think, two plainly different styles of action. We may illustrate this, very imperfectly of course, from our own Legislature. The House of Lords sits as supreme court of appeal, and also as legislative assembly. In one capacity its duty is simply to interpret the existing law exactly as any inferior court would do; in its other capacity it has not to interpret, but to make law; to say not what has been the meaning hitherto attributed to it by lawyers, but to say, such ought to be, and such henceforth shall be the law.

The Pope must necessarily be infallible in his capacity



of teacher, but he need not be so, and certainly is not declared to be so, in his character of supreme judge. The Vatican council expressly says that he is infallible "in discharge of the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians."

The case of Galileo then rests on this question: Was the Pope deciding as ordinary supreme judge? or did he intend to act as supreme pastor and teacher of all Christians? He might have assumed either capacity according to his own judgment, but Catholics hold that he was plainly acting, in the first capacity, as judge, and judge only.

1. It is not the habit of the Church to decide definitely such points as that proposed.

2. A great many very orthodox people held, and were allowed to hold, very similar doctrines, only in such a way as to avoid giving scandal.

3. Even the most zealous opponents of Copernicanism never considered that the Church had intended to make the opposing doctrine an article of faith.

4. The decree condemning Galileo was not pronounced in such a manner as to make it an *ex cathedra* and infallible decree of the Pope.

A Protestant writer, Karl von Gebler, in his very exhaustive work, shows this plainly enough.

"According to these maxims (of Rome)," he says, "a proposition can only be made into a dogma by 'infallible' authority, namely, by the Pope speaking *ex cathedra*, or by an Œcumenical Council; and on the other hand, it is only by the same method that an obligation can be laid upon the faithful to consider an opinion heretical. But a decree

of the Congregation of the Index does not entail the obligation ; for, although by virtue of the authority conferred on it, it can enforce obedience and inflict punishment, its decrees are not 'infallible.' They can, however, be made so, according to ecclesiastical views, either by the subsequent express confirmation of the Pope by a brief in his name, as supreme head of the Christian Catholic Church ; or by the decree of the congregation being originally provided with the clause : '*Sanctissimus confirmavit et publicari mandavit*,' but the decree of 5th March, 1616, is neither confirmed by a subsequent brief nor does it contain that special formula ; and, therefore, in spite of this decree, which declared the opinions of Copernicus to be 'false and contrary to Holy and Divine Scripture,' it might still be considered as undecided and even probable, because the decree might be fallible, and did not entail the obligation to adopt its sentence as an article of faith" (p. 236). The writer continues a little later : "Undoubtedly Pope Paul V. wished the decree made and privately instigated it, as Urban VIII. did the sentence against Galileo ; and in this sense the former may be attributed to the one, and the latter to the other, and the condemnation of the Copernican theory to both. But in this they acted as private persons, and, as such, they were not (nor would they now be), according to theological rules, 'infallible.' The conditions which would have made the decree of the congregation, or the sentence against Galileo, of dogmatic importance, were, as we have seen, wholly wanting. Both Popes had been too cautious to endanger this highest privilege of the Papacy by involving their infallible authority in a decision of a scientific controversy ;

they therefore refrained from conferring their sanction, as heads of the Roman Catholic Church, on the measures taken at their instigation, by the congregation 'to suppress the doctrine of the revolution of the earth.' Thanks to this sagacious foresight, Roman Catholic posterity can say to this day, that Paul V. and Urban VIII. were in error 'as men' about the Copernican system, but not 'as Popes'" (p. 239).

In confirmation of this statement the author, in a note, subjoins the following remarks :

"Gassendi remarks in his great work, 'De motu impresso,' published nine years after the condemnation of Galileo, on the absence of the papal ratification in the sentence of the Holy Tribunal, and that therefore the negation of the Copernican system was not an article of faith. As a good priest he recognises the high authority of the decision of the congregation, and subjects his personal opinions to it. Father Riccioli, in his comprehensive work '*Almagestum novum*,' published nine years after Gassendi's, reproduces Gassendi's statement word for word, and entirely concurs with it, even in the book which was meant to confute the Copernican system at all points. Father Fabri, a French Jesuit, afterwards Grand Penitentiary at Rome, says, in a dissertation published there, in 1661, against the *Systema Saturnium* of Huyghens, that as no valid evidence can be adduced for the truth of the new system, the authorities of the Church are quite right in interpreting the passages of the Holy Scripture relating to the system of the universe literally; 'but,' he adds, 'if ever any conclusive reasons are discovered (which I do not expect), I do not doubt that the Church will say



that they are to be taken figuratively,' a remark which no priest would have made about a doctrine pronounced heretical by infallible authority. Caramuel, a Spanish Benedictine, who also discussed the future of the Copernican theory, defines the position still more clearly than Fabri. In his 'Theologia fundamentalis,' published at Lyons in 1676, after defending the decree and the sentence of the congregation, he discusses the attitude which the Church will take in case the system should prove indisputably true. In the first place he believes this will never happen, and if it does, *it could never be said that the Church of Rome had been in error, as the doctrine of the double motion of the earth had never been condemned by an Œcumenical Council, nor by the Pope, speaking ex cathedra, but only by the tribunal of Cardinals.*" \*

The Pope, therefore, as far as he acted in the matter, either by condemning Galileo, or causing him to be condemned by the Council of the Inquisition, plainly acted as judge and not as teacher of the Catholic Church, and refrained from that course which would have brought his infallible authority into action.

\* Note to p. 236, "Galileo Galilei and the Roman Curia," by Karl von Gebler.

## CHAPTER V

### THE NATURE OF FAITH

Faith not necessarily sudden or miraculous—Cardinal Newman's account of it—Faith in those who err invincibly—Faith and argument—Nature of the Church's Infallibility—Explicit faith—"Triple cord of witnesses"—Effect of religious certainty—Faith and love—Searching for a guide—The "Mountain of Papal Infallibility"—Continued Divine guidance—Unity of spirit—"Altars of Joseph and Mary"—Supreme and inferior honour.

THE objections considered in this chapter are on the nature of Faith. Dr. Mahan thinks that we take a wrong view of it.

"Faith is indeed," he says, "a gift of God, but not a gift suddenly and arbitrarily bestowed, or bestowed on 'compliance with some single specified condition' (p. 27). Roman writers speak of it as a 'miraculous-gift, a kind of new faculty bestowed upon him who submits to infallible guidance, enabling him to believe everything that is told him upon that authority, and sealing his soul against all intrusion of doubt and mental perplexity. In this way, Mr. Newman speaks of faith as something that he never had before his conversion to Romanism, but which he suddenly received then'" (p. 27).

Dr. Mahan considers that faith ought not to be a "mere

submission to authority," nor a "bare and naked hearing of one infallible authority," but should be rather "distinguished by that manly and vigorous good sense which, first believing upon evidence (not merely upon authority), afterwards led the Centurion, with a child-like facility of obedience to the spirit of that evidence, to be wiser, so to speak, than even his Infallible Teacher" (p. 28)—for which manly and vigorous good sense he thinks the Roman system leaves no room. Faith, he says, ought to be "‘childlike’ without being childish"; whereas he thinks that faith, on Catholic principles, must necessarily be childish. He also considers that the Catholic idea of faith has allowed a "system of additions to the Creed to be introduced, which have a strong family likeness to the corruptions of heathenism," and which are defended by precisely the same arguments that polytheism employed" (p. 45).

From this Dr. Mahan proceeds to an attack on devotion to our Lady, which he says is now "boldly called ‘the deification of St. Mary,’" and devotion to the Saints generally.

There are amongst these points a good many things which it would be desirable to discuss.

Let us first consider the view that, according to the Catholics, faith is a "miraculous gift, a kind of new faculty." This is quite a mistake. Faith, though of course always a supernatural gift, is not necessarily, nor usually, given in a miraculous manner. It may be granted in a sudden and wonderful way, as it was with St. Paul, but, ordinarily, it follows on proof, argument, and conviction. St. Paul tells us that faith comes by hearing, and it is



plain that ordinarily faith was granted to those who had listened to the preaching of the apostles with good dispositions. Again, faith does not "seal the soul against all intrusion of doubt and mental perplexity." All men are liable to temptations against faith, which they must all bravely resist; and they often have occasion, as the apostle did, to say, "Lord, increase our faith!"

Moreover, it is not true that faith essentially consists in submitting to infallible guidance, or that it is impossible to have any faith outside the Catholic Church.

It is hardly necessary to show that faith did not mean following an infallible guide when no such guide had been appointed; and on the other hand, it is sufficiently plain that *if* there is an infallible guide given by God, faith must ordinarily involve accepting the authority of that guide, as soon as it is made known.

Faith implies the willingness of mind, by God's grace, to accept and believe whatever God has revealed, *because* He has revealed it, and under the conditions on which He has been pleased to reveal it, as soon as sufficient evidence has been given that He *has* revealed it. Faith requires a certain amount of evidence to rest upon, and there is a point beyond which it is a man's own fault if he resists conviction. It is impossible for men, however, to say exactly where that point is.

The ordinary way in which this conviction comes, in the Christian dispensation at any rate, is by listening to the voice of a teacher sent by God; as "teaching" was obviously the way appointed by which men were to become acquainted with the truth; but any way in which real conviction is brought home to the mind may be the

foundation of real faith. For example, in the Old Law, God, by His own immediate voice, or by the voices of His prophets, gave His servants abundant grounds for being sure that He had spoken, and their believing His word was faith. Similarly, people out of the Catholic Church, at the present day, may have abundant grounds for a real faith, for example, in the Incarnation or the Blessed Trinity.

But Dr. Mahan says that Newman speaks of it as something he never had before his conversion, and suddenly received then (p. 27). I can only say I have never seen any such passage in his writings. He says, "I am not conscious to myself, on my conversion, of any change, intellectual or moral, wrought in my mind. I was not conscious of firmer faith in the fundamental truths of Revelation, or of more self-command" ("History of my Religious Opinions," p. 238).

On this point, I will quote a passage from Cardinal de Lugo, as high a theological authority as there is. He says: "Those who err invincibly about some articles of faith, and believe others, are not formally heretics, but have supernatural faith, by which they believe the true articles of faith, and so from this faith acts of perfect contrition can proceed, by which they may be justified and saved" (De Lugo, xii. 350).

This does not look much like the doctrine ascribed to us by Dr. Mahan.

In his sermon on "Illuminating Grace," Cardinal Newman, after contrasting opinion resting upon reason, with faith resting upon Divine Grace, proceeds thus: "I have been speaking as if a state of nature were utterly

destitute of the influences of grace, and as if those who are external to the Church, acted simply from nature. I have so spoken for the sake of distinctness, that grace and nature might clearly be contrasted with each other; but it is not the case in fact. God gives His grace to all men, and to those who profit by it, He gives more grace, and even those who quench it still have the offer. Hence some men act simply from nature; some act from nature in some respects, not in others; others are yielding themselves to the guidance of the assistances given them; others may even be in a state of justification. Hence it is impossible to apply what has been said above to individuals whose hearts are a secret with God. Many are under the influence partly of reason and partly of faith, believe some things firmly, and have but an opinion on others." \*

This seems to me the exact contrary of what Dr. Mahan makes Newman say.

The essence of faith is to believe on God's authority, trusting to His being the very truth. It is clear that you could not be really doing this if you consciously rejected the authority appointed by Him to teach, or, what comes to the same thing, if you selected amongst the truths proposed to you by this authority, accepting some truths and rejecting others. It is clear, moreover, that if, consciously or otherwise, you have set aside this authority, there can be but few things on which you have sufficient grounds for a real conviction. Catholic writers naturally say, therefore, that outside the Church there are few things held with real faith, and many more held as mere matters of opinion, but it certainly does not follow from Catholic principles that

\* "Discourses to Mixed Congregations," p, 199.



those out of the Church without any fault, have not real faith in the fundamental truths of religion.

Dr. Mahan goes on to argue that faith is shown to be quite consistent with the use of understanding, with inquiring, arguing, asking many questions, and so forth. He speaks of it (p. 28) not as a "mere submission to authority," not a "bare and naked hearing of an infallible teacher," but "manly and vigorous good sense," "first believing upon evidence (not merely on authority.)" This is one of the great mistakes that run through his book. There is nothing whatever in the doctrine of an infallible teacher to discourage any amount of inquiry, of critical research, and close investigation. No question of Catholic doctrine is ever decided by authority without long and patient investigation, without hearing, again and again, all that has to be said about it. Take the doctrines decided in our own days. For how many centuries have the Immaculate Conception and the Papal Infallibility been discussed? how many hundreds of writers have expressed their opinions on both sides? Let us hear Cardinal Newman on this subject. "It is the custom," he says, "with Protestant writers to consider that, whereas there are two great principles in action in the history of religion, they have all the private judgment to themselves, and we have the full inheritance and the superincumbent pressure of authority. But this is not so; it is the vast Catholic body itself, and it only, which affords an arena for both combatants in that awful, never ending duel. It is necessary for the very life of religion, viewed in its large operations and in its history, that the warfare should be incessantly carried on. Every exercise of Infallibility is

brought out into act by an intense and varied operation of the reason, both as its ally and its opponent, and provokes again, when it has done its work, a reaction of reason against it," . . . and so "Catholic Christendom is no simple exhibition of religious absolutism, but presents a continuous picture of authority and private judgment alternately advancing and retreating as the ebb and flow of the tide." \*

It may be said, perhaps, that although theological questions are closely sifted and thoroughly argued amongst the clergy, the lay Catholic, as Dr. Mahan says, "must follow, as the heathen did, 'even as he is led.'" This is a complete mistake. Catholics, educated or uneducated, have, as a rule, a far more accurate and intelligent notion of what they themselves believe, and why they hold it than the corresponding classes of Protestants. Do we not frequently hear people say, "You Catholics are all so well up in controversy"; do they not complain of what they call our "proselytising" propensities?

We constantly find Protestants who, for themselves and their friends, avoid controversy with Catholics as carefully as possible. Why so? what does this mean? It is clear that they are instinctively aware that Catholics generally, instead of being "led like the heathen," know much better where they are going than most of the people they meet. This is often true of the very poor. They may sometimes be ignorant in many things, but they generally have a pretty keen and shrewd notion of the principles of their religion, as many a man has discovered on trying a little controversy with an Irish labourer or servant girl.

\* "History of my Religious Opinions," p. 252.

But it may be objected : How can there be any room for the exercise of reason if there is an authority able to answer questions infallibly ? This objection comes from a misunderstanding as to the kind of infallibility our Lord has given to His Church. It is not a sort of inspiration enabling the Pope to explain, at his pleasure, any difficulty in religion, and to give infallible answers to any questions that may be proposed to him as an oracle might do. On the contrary, our Lord left His faith to be worked out, as it were, by human means, and gave His own guarantee of infallibility, not to save His people the toil of reading and thought, but to secure them from being ultimately led wrong. It is very closely parallel with the way in which He established His Church upon earth. He co-operated with His apostles, and guaranteed their ultimate success, but He did not therefore spare them the toil and hard fighting by which the work was in fact achieved. To quote Cardinal Newman again : "Nor was the development of dogmatic theology which was taking place, a silent and spontaneous process. It was wrought out and carried through, under the fiercest controversies, and amid the most fearful risks" ("Essay on Development," p. 447).

The Infallibility of the Pope, then, is not a sort of inspiration which makes learning superfluous, but it requires and supposes the use of human means, the careful consideration of the Scriptures, the tradition of the Church, and so forth. Cardinal du Perron says, it "does not consist in his always receiving at once from the Holy Ghost the necessary light to decide questions of faith, but in his deciding without error in matters in which he feels himself enlightened by God."



There is therefore plenty of room left for that exercise of faith (which Dr. Mahan rightly considers very profitable), which is given by half-explanations, by things less clearly told than they might be, by "enigmatical instruction leaving room for opinion." In short, there is no fear that faith will not always be a "light shining in a dark place," casting a little light here and there, and leaving a great deal in darkness, and it is quite certain that in this life we shall always see "as in a glass in a dark manner," however many infallible decisions may be given.

"It is said by Romanists," says the editor in a note (p. 33), "that nothing can be called faith which does not receive every article of revealed religion." True, but Romanists also explain what they mean, and do not say "that belief in Christ is not faith till it has consciously, and explicitly received the Creed in its logical and dogmatical development"—a proposition of which the editor speaks with much zeal. It is undoubtedly true that nothing can be called faith which does not receive every article of revealed religion, as far as you have means of knowing it to be revealed, but you may have faith although many revealed truths have never been brought to your knowledge. I have given a rather full explanation of explicit and implicit faith in the "Credentials of the Catholic Church," and I need not now go into the question.

I now come to what I consider the great point to be discussed with Dr. Mahan. He draws a distinction between those who believe on "one infallible authority," and those who rest upon a number of distinct concurrent authorities, striking the balance, and so forth, between them. This latter course he considers more intelligent, more manly

more conducive to the exercise of many Christian virtues than the other. What I want to ask is : can any line be drawn between the two without giving up the whole principle of authority? Supposing you have tried all the different sources of knowledge—the different witnesses that Dr. Mahan talks about—and they do not agree, or you think they do not agree, which are you to follow? Are you to give up your own opinion and follow authority, or are you to disregard authority and follow your own opinion? To take for example something which Dr. Mahan would consider as undoubtedly decided: supposing a man by “consulting witnesses,” by reading the Scriptures and the Ante-Nicene Fathers, by reasoning and so forth, had formed an opinion distinctly opposed to the decision of the Council of Nicæa—that is, *against* the Divinity of our Lord; is he to give up his own opinion, or to reject the decree of the Council? If the first, how is he at all better off in regard to “manliness,” and all the other excellent results of a “triple cord of witnesses,” etc., than one who gives up his opinion to the decree of the Vatican Council, or to any *ex cathedra* decision of the Holy See? On the other hand, if he ought to stand to his own judgment, and reject the decree of the Council, every idea of authority is surely at an end, and you have arrived at a “system which has no dogmatic certainty, but leaves everything in question”; which, as Dr. Mahan truly says, is “ruinous to the spiritual part of our nature” (p. 35).

You may say he ought to weigh well all the arguments, and consider deeply the authorities, but that when the deliberate voice of the Church is against him, he ought

to consider it as the pronouncement of God. True; but that is exactly the Catholic system—and open to precisely the same objections, if any.

Dr. Mahan may also say that the ecclesiastical decisions which *he* recognises, are such as to leave no room for differences; that the doctrine they teach is so plain that the "other witnesses" he speaks of cannot contradict them. That, however, is a view which can hardly be maintained, and which a very slight knowledge of real life would refute. I think, therefore, that he fails to show that there can be any kind of obedience to authority, more than a mere name, which is not liable to the objections he makes to the Catholic rule of faith, in exactly the same way.

There is another point on which I should like to join issue. It is this. Dr. Mahan speaks of religious certainty as a thing rather prejudicial both to the intellect and to the heart. He says: a system "that bars the door against all intrusion of doubt and allows no inquiry, is fatal to the intellectual part" of man's nature (p. 35). Again, that "faith and love are so connected in the soul that—as in the race between Peter and John—love must outrun faith, or faith will run to no purpose" (p. 37).

Can any one seriously maintain that certainty, of any kind, is an injury to the understanding of men? How can it possibly injure the intellectual part of our nature to be certain of any truth, whether in the natural or the supernatural order? If God had revealed, for example, the Divinity of our Lord in such a manner that it could not possibly be called in question, how could that be an injury to the understanding? If He clearly reveals the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist, does the



intellectual part of our nature require that it should be left uncertain?

Again, if the doctrine of the Atonement is revealed, so that we cannot doubt about it, is love thereby prevented from outrunning faith, so that "faith will run to no purpose?"

The whole argument seems such a paradox that one cannot help thinking that Dr. Mahan meant to say that a thing taught as certain, which was not really certain, was injurious: that is, that he is (as I said before) unconsciously begging the question and assuming that the claims of the Roman Church are unfounded, and her doctrines untrue—the very thing he is trying to establish.

But, Dr. Mahan goes on to say, Romanists profess to allow investigation, but then they would limit its use to finding an infallible guide, and tell us to lay it aside the moment we have found him. Your investigation is only a "lantern to guide you to the palace of truth," whereas, in fact, if investigation can teach us that road, it ought to be able to teach us everything else. This is a long subject, and one which I have treated at length in the "Credentials of the Catholic Church."

It does not at all follow that because reason can and ought to find the guide, it can also find the road this guide has to show. The characteristics of a guide, in the nature of things, must be such as to be apparent to mankind generally. He must, in some way or other, address himself to the very nature and senses of those to whom he is sent, so that all may be able to recognize him. In this way came the prophets sent by God. With such signs as this, the apostles went out with authority to teach—and with the

same, the Church now addresses herself to men. I do not mean that at some times, and under some circumstances, these signs, which ought to be so clear, may not become uncertain—still the nature of them is that they are meant to be judged of by human reason, and are calculated for the understandings of all men.

It does not therefore follow that all men can judge of abstract truth. The truth of religion, and indeed, of all abstract truth, is far above the powers of the mass of men, and the sort of proof by which doctrines are to be judged is, of its own nature, quite inaccessible to them. This kind of investigation is, moreover, as I have tried to show, quite inconsistent with an authoritative guide. If you have a guide provided for you whom you are to follow, you cannot *also* be called upon to find out the way. You may choose one or the other alternative, but you cannot have both.

There is another reason against this sort of investigation to which I shall have to refer again. It is this. It is almost or quite impossible for men to have a real and accurate knowledge and appreciation of the truth till they have embraced it. For example, the Jewish and Pagan world could not possibly have judged to any purpose of the truths the apostles came to teach them, so as to know whether to accept them or not—if for no other reason—because they could not form anything like a reliable judgment as to what those truths were, as to their real significance and bearing, until they had accepted them. So I consider it must always be : those outside can but form a very vague and inaccurate idea of what the truths taught really are : nothing can be a better illustration of this than

the utter want of comprehension of the Catholic Faith in the very book I am considering.

Dr. Mahan says that "the heaviest mountain that faith has ever been called upon to remove is that which lies in the way of a reception of Papal Infallibility;" and that "this mountain, it is said, may be removed by a thorough examination of Scripture, consent, and antiquity" (p. 33). This is quite a mistake; no Catholic says anything of the kind. The mountain—if mountain it be—is not removed by examination of Scripture, or any other sort of private judgment, but by listening to the teaching of the Church. It is decided by exactly the same authority that defined the Divinity of our Lord at the Council of Nicæa. No doubt in both cases there was plenty of examination of "Scripture, consent, and antiquity," but the acceptance of the doctrine, in each case, depends upon the judgment of the Catholic Church. Dr. Mahan compares the doctrine of Papal Infallibility to a mountain, and yet those who follow his views profess some sort of authoritative and infallible teaching in the Church: can they point out any way in which the Church can teach infallibly, or really teach with authority, which is less mountainous—I mean, which does not present difficulties quite as great? Would it be much easier to believe in the infallibility of a General Council? Neither a council nor one man can decide infallibly except by a direct gift from God. Is it much easier to believe that a majority in a council of bishops has received that gift, than to believe that it has been bestowed on the successor of St. Peter?

Dr. Mahan speaks of the "stress which the advocate of Papal Infallibility seems to lay upon the promise of guiding



the apostles into all truth." He says: "If the promise refers to the guidance of inspiration, it was fulfilled of course in apostolic times, and the entire creed was then once for all delivered, nothing being kept back which could be profitable to Christians" (p. 43); and he proceeds to argue that this was compatible, as we learn from Scripture and history, with a great deal of "temporary and widespread error," particularly in the shape of a tendency to making additions to the Creed. Such, he considers, is the state of things now; and, he says, moreover, that "whatever errors prevail, they are still protested against and attacked," and that "it is sufficient for faith that the battle against error is still kept up" (p. 45).

How, it may be asked, can this "guiding to all truth" be considered as sufficiently fulfilled by the Creed given to the apostles, when it is plain that this Creed absolutely required subsequent explanation? For example: we all know the history of the Arian heresy. We know how large and powerful a body in the Church, three hundred years after the apostles, taught that our Lord was not truly God, but was only a creature. Did the Church require Divine guidance in deciding this question or not? Are we to consider the decision of the Council of Nicæa as simply the opinion of unauthorized individuals without any claim to Divine guidance? If not, how can it be said that the promise, on which the Church relied, had been fulfilled and had come to an end, three hundred years before?

The world was then, as it is now, full of "temporary and widespread error." True, and how did the Church meet that state of things? The Church assembled its bishops, and pronounced definitively what was truth and what was

error, and required all men to acquiesce in its teaching. It did so in the times of the apostles, in the fourth century, and in most succeeding centuries ; and certainly was not contented with "protesting against and attacking" error, in the sense of allowing individuals to write protests against what they personally considered wrong.

There were plenty of errors, but surely it is a matter of obvious history that the course the early Church took with regard to them was precisely the course which the Roman Church takes to this present day, and which none but the Roman Church can venture to adopt.

Dr. Mahan gives an explanation of our Lord's promise to St. Peter in the words, "Thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren" (St. Luke xxii. 32). This promise, he says, is quite compatible with St. Peter's fall, and took effect on his conversion : it may reasonably be considered also compatible with a grievous fall on the part of his successors, and may be waiting for its fulfilment till they are converted : that is till they have turned away "from the temper and policy of the last thousand years" (p. 50).

It would naturally be understood that the commission given to St. Peter would not come into force so long as Christ was visibly present Himself. It was obviously given in anticipation of the time when "the Bridegroom should be taken away" from them. St. Peter's fall was one foretold, at the time, to happen before our Lord's departure. These circumstances do not, therefore, in any way interfere with a distinct commission to St. Peter and his successors taking effect from the time of our Lord's Ascension. To say, however, that the promise was to depend upon the fall and conversion of his successors, of which no prophecy

had been given, and on which it was left to the private judgment of individuals to decide, is to deprive the promise of all meaning.

The question, however, of the Pope's infallibility, as I have said before, does not depend upon this or any other test, but ultimately rests upon the decision of the Catholic Church. It is for the Church to say who is her appointed ruler and what are his prerogatives.

I am sorry to see Dr. Mahan speaking of "the sword of physical coercion," and of "more bloodshed than has ever stained any dynasty on earth." I thought that all sensible men, at the present day, were pretty well aware that persecution and "the sword," in one shape or other, were by no means peculiar to the Church of Rome. Surely it is well known that in former days all religious bodies used force, and that the Church was frequently compelled to do so in self-defence. The Church of England, at any rate, is not in a position to say much about persecution, and it seems better for all parties to avoid so unpleasant a subject of recrimination.

Dr. Mahan concludes his chapter by arguing that the unity promised was to be "unity of spirit in the bond of peace," and that "Rome fails to command reverence, because it is a unity of earthly empire: it is a despotic unity" (p. 51).

St. Paul certainly does exhort the Ephesians to walk worthy of their vocation, and to be "careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," as our Lord Himself had said, "Peace I leave unto you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you" (St. John xiv. 27).



Notwithstanding this, however, our Lord was very far from promising that His disciples should always have peace externally. On the contrary, He says : " Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth ; I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother " (St. Matt. x. 34). The plain meaning of this clearly is that although His faith, if rightly received, was calculated to give that peace " which surpasseth all understanding " ; yet that, coming into a world which was not willing to receive it, and where men at times would " not endure sound doctrine," it would, in fact, very often bring " not peace but the sword." No one, I think, can deny that such has been the case since the commencement of Christianity.

Does Dr. Mahan really mean to say that our Lord's promises were to be dependent upon the union of professing Christians in the bond of peace, and were to be in abeyance till they were all so united? I should think it hardly possible to take such a view of them. Of course he can maintain that the pretensions of the Roman Church have been opposed to that peace, because they were unfounded—which is begging the question : but it is manifest that, if the Supremacy of the Roman Pontiff was really appointed by Christ, all the dissensions arising from it are due, not to the Holy See, but to the disobedience of those who reject a divinely-established authority. I say this, *assuming*, for argument's sake, that the authority of the Holy See has been the cause of dissension, whereas, in fact, it has been the great instrument of the peace and unity which Christendom has enjoyed.

What does Dr. Mahan mean by calling it a "unity of

earthly empire?" Does he maintain that the Catholic world is kept in obedience to the Pope by physical force? This is certainly rather a large assertion to make, considering that the Holy See has been almost without worldly power for centuries, and that, at this moment, there is not a Government on earth which is not openly or secretly opposed to it. I think it can hardly be denied that the Catholic Church is an empire, not by virtue of the power of the world, but in spite of it; how then can it be called a "unity of earthly empire"?

I have left to the last the consideration of what Dr. Mahan and his editor say of the devotion to our Blessed Lady and the Saints. This is indeed a serious question. If the devotion paid to our Lady were really such as they describe it, there can be no question that it would be simple idolatry. But it is, in fact, nothing at all like it, and the accusations can only be met by positive denials. There is not a "strong family likeness" between our devotion and the "corruptions of heathenism"—except to those who know nothing about it: and it is not "defended by precisely the same arguments," or any resembling them. We do not say that in the saints "we worship the multitudinous attributes of the one true God," as the pagans worshipped in Pallas, wisdom; in Mars, terror; and so forth: we do not worship our Lady as the "embodiment and beauteous reflection" of His mercy. We do not dream of worshipping goodness otherwise than in its source, "where it is enthroned with all other perfections in the bosom of Almighty God," or contemplate any "attribute apart from Him." To do so would undoubtedly be to "sever from Him one of His choicest attributes" and to "dismember the Godhead,"

since, as the writer truly says, "His attributes, in their perfection, exist only in Himself" (p. 46, note), and to worship them apart from Him, and "embodied" in any creature whatsoever, would be an act of detestable idolatry.

We do not place the "altars of Joseph and Mary" alongside the altars of Jesus, in the sense in which our opponents mean, at any rate. We do not spend our gold, and offer our frankincense at a "lower shrine" (p. 46), so as to have nothing left for the altar of Jesus but "the tribute of the acknowledgment of justice." To do so would be an abominable impiety.

Protestants do not seem to have the slightest notion of the constant and tender devotion to our Lord which is the very life of the Catholic Church. People who talk as Dr. Mahan does, cannot know anything of the incessant devotion which Catholics practise to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist; of the thousands who hear Mass every day, and come to visit our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament all day long, or of the constantly recurring Benedictions and Expositions of the Blessed Sacrament, which the Church enjoins. On every occasion of joy or sorrow, hope or fear, the first idea of the Catholic Church is to call on her children to rally round our Lord in His Eucharistic Presence. The Blessed Sacrament is exposed, and people come in thousands to pour out their troubles or their thanksgivings before Him.

Again, they can know nothing of the numberless ways in which the Church excites our devotion to our Lord's Passion. The devotion to the Sacred Heart, to the Precious Blood, and many others, are direct and immediate



addresses to our Lord, of the tenderest and most devotional kind. Of all this devotion, writers such as Dr. Mahan seem to know absolutely nothing. Who, for instance, could be familiar with the devotion of the "Stations of the Cross," so constantly practised amongst Catholics in public and in private, and yet venture to talk of our giving our affections, and "spending our gold and offering our frankincense at a lower shrine"?

There is, indeed, plenty of devotion to our Lady and the Saints in the Catholic Church; but this, as all Catholics fully understand, is but a mere fringe round the one great central devotion to God Incarnate, which is the life of the Catholic Church, and, indeed, the very reason and object of her existence.

I was saying just now how difficult it was for those out of the Church to form any accurate or adequate notion of what her doctrines really are. This is well illustrated by Dr. Mahan's remarks on devotion to our Lady. It is in vain that Catholic writers go on protesting against such views as those here put forward, and trying to explain what they really mean. It is in vain that hundreds, who have been themselves Protestants, and have entered the Church in mature life, join their protest. Protestant writers go on forming their own theories of what is, and must be, the Catholic doctrine, and its bearing and results. They judge from a theological expression here, and a practical phrase there, and, by their deductions from these, they settle the Catholic doctrine. They are, in short, to use Cardinal Newman's simile, like the celebrated tailors in the island of Laputa, who suited their customers not by measuring them in a commonplace way, but by taking their altitude with a

theodolite, and calculating their proportions by algebra. It is, no doubt, the fault of their position ; they have no personal acquaintance with the Catholic faith about the saints, and other doctrines, and proceed therefore to deduce what it must be from such stray facts, and words, as may come under their cognizance, the real meaning and drift of which they cannot understand. Every Catholic, even the most ignorant, knows that such views of the Catholic faith are entirely false, and, though no doubt put forward by the writers in all good faith, are, in fact, a gross calumny.

Cardinal Newman says : " Only this I know full well now, and did not know then, that the Catholic Church allows no image of any sort, material or immaterial, no dogmatic symbol, no rite, no sacrament, no saint, not even the Blessed Virgin herself, to come between the soul and its Creator. It is face to face, *solus cum solo*, in all matters between man and his God. He alone creates ; He alone has redeemed ; before His awful eyes we go in death ; in the vision of Him is our eternal beatitude." \*

Every one who has experience of the Catholic Church will acknowledge that this is strictly true, and would shrink with horror from any sort of devotion which really interfered with the supreme and incommunicable worship due to God, or our immediate dependence upon Him.

But how about the "altars to Joseph and Mary," beside the altar of Jesus? Do not the beautiful altars to our Lady we sometimes see, prove that the worship paid to her is something like that given to God? I might just as well argue that, in Richmond, for example, the Church of England has a Church of the Holy Trinity, and also one,

\* " History of my Religious Opinions," p. 195.

twice as gorgeous, of St. Matthias, and that therefore there must be a parity between the honour it means to give to God and to the Saint.

If Dr. Mahan condescended to answer such an argument at all, I think he would say the churches were those of the Holy Trinity, and of St. Matthias, in quite distinct senses; that, in fact, every church was a Church of the Blessed Trinity, and that the worship of God was precisely the same in both churches.

That is exactly the answer I have to give to him about altars. Altars are called the altars of Mary and Joseph, and those of our Lord Jesus, in totally distinct senses. Every altar is the altar of Jesus, where, in the Mass, our Lord is High Priest and Sacrifice; where the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving and Praise, the holocaust and sin-offering, is offered to the Eternal God alone; and that, in point of fact, the Mass said at all altars is identical. I do not mean to say that tables are not sometimes set up before statues of our Lady, on which candles and flowers are placed, but they are not really altars at all. It is absurd to speak of these as "altars of Mary" in the smallest degree as comparing with the altar of Jesus, the altar of God.

The doctrine of the Catholic Church in this matter is very simple. There are two sorts of honour. First, Supreme or Divine honour. This belongs to God alone, and is incommunicable, and it would be idolatry to give it to any creature whatsoever. This is given to Him as the beginning and end of all created things, as the source and fountain of all being and of all good, for "of Him, and by Him, and in Him are all things." This is different from any other honour, not in degree, but in kind.



It is manifest, however, and confirmed in every page of Scripture, that there is another sort of honour which may, and must, be given to creatures. All the rational creatures of God have a right to honour in proportion to what God has given to them. If God has bestowed upon them exceptional gifts, and made them His ministers, His stewards, and "set them over many cities," it is plain that they have a right to honour. "Render to all men their dues, . . . tribute to whom tribute, honour to whom honour" (Rom. xiii. 7).

There can be no possible ground for drawing a line, and saying that those who have received intellectual gifts and worldly position shall be honoured, but those who have received spiritual gifts and become the special friends of God may not be honoured. A man is the minister of God in temporal things, and he ought to receive due honour; can any one say he ought not to receive as much honour if he is placed over spiritual things, and made the instrument of spiritual blessings? If a sovereign is placed by God on an earthly throne, we may certainly honour him, and ask his favour; is there any reason why we may not honour those whom He has appointed to "sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel"?

We may ask and beg and entreat as much as we please of the ministers appointed by Him over temporal things; why may we not ask for spiritual things also from those whom He has made ministers of spiritual blessings?

Nothing is more plain than that God makes His creatures the channels of spiritual graces as well as of temporal blessings, and one of the means by which they are communicated is prayer. Constant mention is made of prayer

as a means by which God's grace has been obtained for others, why then may we not ask it?

But may it not be said that the honour given to creatures, the trust placed in them, the affection lavished upon them, interferes with the honour due to God? Certainly not. If it did so, it would plainly be unlawful to give any such honour, and the result would be that the Christian religion would have the effect of discouraging all the natural feelings of homage, reverence, and affection with which men ought to regard those who are set over them, whereas it certainly does not do so. "Be ye subject to every human creature for God's sake," St. Peter says, and everywhere we find religion encouraging such feelings.

If it were true that wherever you gave way to tender and loving and enthusiastic feelings for creatures you were necessarily "spending your gold" and "offering your frankincense at a lower shrine," so as to have little left for Almighty God, such feelings would manifestly be wrong. Every one knows that it is not so, and that these feelings do not clash. You may, for instance, have as tender, reverential, and devoted a love as you wish, for your mother; but it does not, or, at any rate, need not interfere, and ought not to interfere, at all with what you owe to God. The reverence given to the Blessed Virgin and the saints is, in its nature, exactly the same as the honour given to creatures upon earth. Of course it has a more distinctly religious character, as being more directly connected with religion and the spiritual world, and it is in proportion to the greatness of the gifts we believe them to have received from God, and to the share which we believe them to have in the dispensing of His

favours. St. Paul says of the angels: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" (Heb. i. 14). We need have no difficulty, therefore, in believing that the saints, reigning with Christ, have a share in continuing that great work which was their special occupation here, and "minister for those who shall receive the inheritance of salvation."

The Blessed Virgin, of course, is placed in an exceptional position, and receives an honour above others, though of exactly the same nature. No one who really believes the Mystery of the Incarnation can fail to see that her position is one of pre-eminent dignity, and that she must always be "blessed amongst women" and above all creatures. The more vivid the belief in the Incarnation is, the greater is, and always has been, the honour paid to Mary; indeed, one of the great objects of the Church in encouraging special devotion to her is that this spirit necessarily keeps up a full and devout faith in the Incarnation.

The chief difficulty of the Catholic doctrine about the saints is a difficulty about words. Human language is not able always to distinguish adequately between the different sorts of honour. The same terms are frequently used of both kinds of reverence, and are applied indifferently to God and to the saints. For instance, the people "believed the Lord and His servant Moses" (Exodus xiv. 31); "the sword of the Lord and Gideon" (Judges vii. 20); they "worshipped the Lord and the King" (1 Chron. xxix. 20); to take expressions as found in the Anglican version.



Such words as "worship" and "adore" are constantly found used of creatures, and indeed there is no reason from the derivation of the words why they should not be so employed.

Catholic writers are therefore compelled, when they would be very accurate, to invent such words as *Latria*, *Dulia*, *Hyperdulia*; but these certainly have an alarming sound, and we cannot expect poets and preachers to use them, nor can we expect that they will adapt themselves readily to devotional purposes.

I have two more things to say before concluding. The first is this: Dr. Mahan says "the position in which we are placed by what is now boldly called 'the deification of St. Mary.'"

"Boldly called" by whom? He does not attempt to bring forward any proof that such a phrase is in use amongst Catholics, and such a statement, without any sort of proof, is a very serious charge for any author to make. Such an expression, or something of which it is supposed to be a translation, may possibly have been used by some writer, but I have no doubt the meaning was sufficiently plain from the context; at any rate, I should like to see the context, and if Dr. Mahan had any such passage in view, it would have been only fair to refer to it. In the absence of such reference, I can only say that I never heard of such an expression or anything like it.\*

\* Since the above was written, a friend, an Anglican clergyman, has told me the origin of the charge. In Newman's "Essay on Development" (1st edition), the words, "Deification of the Saints," appear as a head-line at the top of page 403, and the words, "Deification of

The other is concerning the text from the Revelations which is so often brought against us : " See thou do it not ; I am thy fellow-servant " (Apoc. xix. 10).

Now this text may mean (1) That it is unlawful to give to any creature the honour which is exclusively belonging to God. (2) It may mean that it is unlawful to give *any* honour to *any* creature. (3) It may mean that the particular honour given on the particular occasion was, for some reason or another, an unbecoming and unfitting honour.

The first explanation is one in which all Catholics will cordially agree. The second suits Protestants quite as little as ourselves, since all of them—with perhaps the exception of the Quakers—consider it quite lawful to show marks of respect to creatures.

Therefore, the obvious conclusion seems to be that the prohibition was uttered because, through a mistake, St. John

St. Mary," as a head-line above pages 405, 407, and 409—the purport of the text being to show that the Roman Church could *not* be charged with deifying our Lady.

This is a sufficiently absurd ground for speaking of "what is now boldly called the deification of St. Mary." When, however, it is used as a charge against the Roman Church it is rather too strong. Everybody knows that when Newman wrote, he was *not* a member of the Catholic Church, and that the authorities of the Church declined to examine his book or be responsible for it. How could he possibly know much of the details of Catholic doctrine, or the feelings of Catholics, or the expressions they used ?

But why did ecclesiastical authorities refuse to interfere ? Obviously, because his book was of immense interest to Catholics and Protestants alike, so far as it represented his own thoughts, and line of reasoning. If it had been corrected by Catholics it would have been quite valueless. Who would care to read a book describing Catholic doctrines and feelings, written by a man who had only been a week a member of the Church ?

was really honouring the angel as God, not with the sort of honour which may, and ought to be given to creatures, but with a Divine honour which may be given to God alone. From this text, therefore, nothing can be deduced that really touches the question at issue.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE FATHERS ON CHURCH AUTHORITY

St. Vincent of Lerins—"Universality, Antiquity, Consent"—St. Jerome and St. Augustine—The heathen coming to St. Chrysostom—Divinely appointed governments—St. Cyprian and the Pope—Firmilianus—A "Rhetorical age"—When the Pilot came on board—Argument for the Pope's Supremacy—Infallibility defined too late—and comes with four "special marks."

**I** NOW come to a series of objections taken from the writings of the Fathers. Passages from them are brought forward which show, we are told, that "the notion of a single infallible witness is one of very modern origin." Early writers put forward a number of different tests for discovering truth instead of at once appealing to a divinely appointed authority as they would have done if they had known of one.

For example, a test of truth is given by St. Vincent of Lerins, in his well known rule that we are to go by "what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all."

Moreover, there are passages from St. Cyprian, Firmilianus, and others which seem inconsistent with the doctrine of the Pope's infallibility. This would seem to show that in the early ages the Papal Infallibility was either not known, or, if known, was entirely lost sight of amid "running to and fro and the cumbrous machinery of Provincial and General Councils."

It is also objected that "according to the Roman system" the "divinely appointed pilot came on board when the reefs and quicksands were passed in safety and the vessel was comparatively in an open sea."

Let us take some of these objections in detail.

The first difficulty is that many passages of St. Vincent, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and other Fathers, refer people to the Holy Scriptures, to tradition, to "universality, antiquity, consent," and not to the teaching of the Pope.

This objection seems to prove a little too much. They say nothing about the Pope. True, but they also say nothing about General Councils, or the teaching of bishops and clergy. If these passages are to be understood quite literally, they teach simple private judgment; if, on the other hand, they mean that people are to refer to Scripture and other sources of knowledge in such a manner as not to contradict the doctrines laid down by the Church in General Councils, why are they not equally consistent with deference to the teaching of the Pope?

For example, St. Vincent of Lerins wrote just after the condemnation of Nestorius at the Third General Council. When he tells men to be guided by what has been "believed everywhere, always, and by all;" did he mean that every man was at liberty to re-open the question decided at that Council, and settle for himself the doctrine concerning the Person of Christ by his own ideas of Universality, Antiquity, and Consent? or would he hold that each individual is bound to receive the Church's decision as final, and take for granted that what the council teaches *is* consistent with Scripture and tradition?

The whole question surely turns upon the principle on

which men are to interpret Scripture and tradition. If they are bound to accept the judgment of the existing Church as far as it has been given—"to be guided," as St. Vincent says, "by the ecclesiastical and Catholic sense"—every word of the passages in question is in complete harmony with the Roman system ; if not, it is absolute private judgment, and, apparently, would suit Dr. Mahan's views as little as ours. The history of the Church in those days does not leave much room to doubt which is the true interpretation. In the fourth and fifth centuries there were four General Councils, not to speak of Provincial Councils, which anathematised every one who presumed to differ from their teaching ; what can that mean but that the Church of those days did not consider each man at liberty to go by his own ideas of Scripture, or Tradition, or Antiquity—but absolutely required men to accept the Church's teaching as conclusive ?

It is hardly necessary to quote passages to show that this was the sense in which the Fathers referred people to antiquity. St. Jerome says : "My resolution is to read the ancients, to try everything, to hold fast what is good, and *not to recede from the faith of the Catholic Church.*" And again : "I will lay before you a brief and plain sentiment of my mind ; that we are to abide in that Church, which, founded by the Apostles, endures even unto this day" ; and St. Augustine : "I, for my part, would not believe the Gospel unless the authority of the Catholic Church moved me to it."\*

But why not refer people to the Pope in their difficulties ? It is perfectly plain that the Pope could not act as referee to individual Christians when they were perplexed by the

\* See Waterworth's "Faith of Catholics," i. pp. 73, 83.



controversies arising around them. He could not be at each one's elbow. We are not talking of the days of railways and telegrams. It was then a long and difficult matter to go to the Pope, or to get his opinion on any point. To refer a private individual to the Pope for an answer to his difficulties would have been absurd, since the very question was, What was to be done when points of difference arose on which the Church had not decided? No one imagines that the Pope could settle great questions out of hand for the benefit of individuals; that idea would show a complete ignorance of the sort of infallibility bestowed on him. It cannot be supposed that it would always be clear to all men what was the Pope's teaching on some points. Occasions will always arise when, for a time at least, it is difficult to ascertain what is the judgment of the Church on particular points. On such occasions it is clear that people must judge for themselves, by their own common sense, by looking about them, by considering what they have been taught in childhood and what they know of the meaning of Scripture, and by seeing what is old and what new; always subject to the judgment of the Church when that comes to their knowledge.

But why not refer the inquirer to some priest approved by the Pope? All priests of the Church are in communion with the Pope and approved by him. The difficulty is if "some new contagion essay to spread its foulness." To begin with, all priests would be in the communion of the Church, and it is only when the Church has given its decision, and the contagion has been cast out, that those who persevere in error, cease to be in communion. It

clearly, therefore, would be no guide to refer any one, in such a doubt, to "a priest approved by the Pope."

But surely this is understood. To take the case of the heathen coming to St. Chrysostom, given by Dr. Mahan. Does any one doubt that St. Chrysostom would, in the first instance, refer him to one of his clergy to be instructed in Christianity? and that he would take particular care to send him to one who was not an Arian, but who accepted the two first General Councils? That is perfectly consistent with telling him that he has a "mind and judgment of his own," and pointing out such general rules as he could, for deciding questions on which the Church had not adjudicated, and concerning which divisions amongst the clergy were likely to be found.

But it is not only that these writers seem to ignore the authority of the Holy See. There are passages to be found which contradict it, whereas Dr. Mahan (or rather his editor) considers that in "divinely appointed governments, the first governors are those whose sway is most absolute, and their powers most clearly defined" (p. 60). He instances the divinely appointed powers of Moses and Aaron. This is not a very happy illustration, as we all know that, in fact, the Jews revolted against the authority of Moses, and a special miracle was needed to establish it. It is true, of course, that any one specially appointed by God must have a personal influence greater than any successor, coming in ordinary course, would possess. St. Peter, for instance, would no doubt have a personal influence and prestige which none of his successors could expect to enjoy. Respect for him would naturally silence all questions as to the limits of his authority.

It is quite consistent with this, however, that a divinely appointed dynasty should grow and consolidate itself, and that it should not do so "without resistance and rebellions." In the early ages of any dominion whatever, however vigorous that dominion may be, the limits of the rights of different claimants to authority are not defined. In the early ages of a monarchy, for instance, however sound and really strong it may be, nobody knows exactly what the power of the king is, what things he has an undoubted right to do, when he may reasonably be resisted, and so forth. Things like this are ascertained by theorising, by experiment, and trials of strength. When the monarchy has existed some centuries, and its constitution and laws have been written about by lawyers, and points of difference have been settled, it is not necessarily any stronger, but it has become quite plain what every one may, and may not, do within the bounds of the constitution. The same applies to the organization of the Church, which was distinctly established to grow and expand, not to remain as it was.

This quite sufficiently explains words such as those brought forward. Earnest men like St. Cyprian, with great zeal and perhaps a little self-will (though he afterwards was a glorious martyr), and a little uncertainty as to exact limits, would easily be led to go rather too far in remonstrance with their ecclesiastical superiors.

But let us see what St. Cyprian really does say: "Each and every prelate has a right to exercise his own discretion in the government of the Church, and must render the account of his conduct to God." This, in one sense, is obviously true, and could be said by every bishop in the



Church, or, for that matter, by every commanding officer in the army, at the present day. Can St. Cyprian have meant by these words that there was no power on earth which could lawfully interfere with a bishop's discretion? Could such a proposition have been maintained at *any* time? Is not St. Cyprian's age full of instances of bishops deposed for heretical teaching or irregular conduct? If this interpretation of the passage is not correct, either for the present day or for any period of Church history, what does it prove?

It cannot have been St. Cyprian's deliberate opinion that a bishop was independent of all control; how then can it be brought to prove that he rejected the authority of the Pope? Surely his words may be sufficiently accounted for by supposing that he considered the exercise of legitimate authority unreasonable in the particular case, and therefore remonstrated with rather undue vehemence.

Dr. Mahan says: "Cyprian was by no means daunted by the excommunications of the Roman Bishop. He appealed with confidence to the Sacred Oracles, and to suffrages of his brethren in the East, from whom he received such encouragement as he would at the present day receive, under similar circumstances, from the same quarters" (p. 57). Now let us consider the circumstances a little more carefully. St. Cyprian was engaged in a dispute with the Pope on a serious matter of discipline, involving a matter of faith, as to rebaptising heretics. The whole Christian Church is now agreed that the Pope was right and St. Cyprian was wrong: there is no doubt that the Pope's teaching and commands prevailed, and St. Cyprian's view is rejected, as false, by everybody, Dr.

Mahan himself included. If then he "appealed with confidence to the Sacred Oracles, and to the suffrages of his brethren," it was on behalf of a doctrine admittedly erroneous, and he was not supported by his brethren, who followed the Pope and not St. Cyprian.

St. Cyprian was very angry with the Holy See for not agreeing with him, and thought the Pope extremely lax in his own views, and very injudicious for interfering with his practice, but, in spite of his grumbling, he never says that the Pope has no jurisdiction out of his own diocese and no right to interfere with other bishops. On the contrary, he thinks it quite right that the Pope should exercise his authority in other parts of the Church, though he would like him to let Africa alone. St. Cyprian writes thus to the Bishop of Rome, urging him to secure the deposition of the Bishop of Arles: "Let letters be addressed *from thee to the Province*, and to the people dwelling at Arles, *whereby Marcianus being excommunicated*, another may be substituted in his room, and the flock of Christ . . . be again collected together. . . . Signify plainly to us who has been substituted in the room of Marcianus, that we may know to whom we should direct our brethren" (St. Cyprian, vol. i. p. 232. Clarke's Edition).

As to his braving "the excommunications of the Roman Bishop," there is no positive evidence that St. Cyprian was ever under excommunication; much less that he died out of communion with the See of Rome. Eusebius does not mention, nor even hint at it. St. Augustine's language does not favour it; indeed it seems to negative the idea: "*Vicit tamen pax Christi in cordibus eorum, ut in tali disputatione nullum inter eos malum schismatis oriretur*—

(The peace of Christ was victorious in their hearts, so that, in such a great dispute, no evil of schism sprang up)." Elsewhere he says that it may not unsuitably be believed of such a man that he corrected his opinion. Indeed St. Augustine says that either there was a mistake and "his opinion was other than has been said; or else he afterwards corrected it by the rule of truth; or else he entirely covered over this spot (so to speak), in his most pure breast, with the abundance of charity, whilst he most abundantly defended the unity of the Church, which was increasing in all the world, and most perseveringly maintained the bond of peace." Our own Venerable Bede, though he does not give his authority, states it as a fact that, through the abundance of his good work, "Cyprian merited to be speedily corrected and to be brought back to the universal law of the Holy Church by the instruction of spiritual men" (Rivington's "Plain Reason," p. 103).

This does not look much like the ardent sympathy and encouragement of his brethren which Dr. Mahan suggests. To be sure there is Firmilianus, who writes a very intemperate letter to the Pope. I suppose there always will be people to write intemperate letters on such occasions, and I do not think Firmilianus is a personage of very much account, and certainly he found no place in the calendar of saints. He says to St. Stephen the Pope: "While thinking that all may be excommunicated by him, he excommunicated himself alone." This is obviously a blunder, or a mere petulant speech, because it is notorious that, on the point in dispute, the Christian world went with St. Stephen, and was not cut off from him.



“St. Augustine says that St. Cyprian’s party consisted of ‘some fifty Orientals, and seventy or a few more Africans, against many hundreds of bishops, to whom this error was displeasing, throughout the world’” (Rivington, p. 105) It clearly was a small party and one which very soon disappeared.

It is not denied that there are very strong passages, which, on the face of them, support the doctrine of the Pope’s supremacy. There are many cases in which the Pope appears to speak with great authority, and to claim supremacy over other bishops, and there are also a number of passages of other Fathers appearing to admit this claim. It is said, however, that it was a “rhetorical age” and, in short, that these passages do not mean what they say: but, let us ask, can any corresponding testimonies be found for any of the other great Sees? It was no doubt a great object for controversialists to get the Bishop of Rome on their side, but why should his judgment have been more important than that of the other Patriarchs? It is often objected that, in the earliest centuries, there were no very great names amongst the Popes: that, for instance, there was no one of such force as a theological champion as St. Athanasius: why then do we not find the same reverence shown to the Patriarchs of Alexandria? The very remarkable chain of evidence from the writings of the Fathers, cannot be put aside simply by calling it a “rhetorical age.”

Some of the passages I have quoted above, such as that of Firmilianus and others like it, at first sight seem to contradict the notion of the Pope’s supremacy: but, let us ask, who would think of expostulating in such a tone, or of speaking as Firmilianus does, unless at any rate, some claim to

universal supremacy was then made? If a claim was made by the Pope to a right to interfere with other bishops in a peremptory manner, and he professed to be able to cut off those who were disobedient from the communion of the Church, and it was commonly supposed that there was some ground for the claim; such protests, reasonable or unreasonable, are intelligible enough; but if he made no greater claim than any one else, and was considered to be on a level of jurisdiction with all other bishops, who would think it worth while to protest? The very protests therefore, which we occasionally find, are really a proof that, at the time, the Pope laid claim to supremacy and exercised jurisdiction over other bishops.

It is clear that such a claim *was* made, and put in force; and the occasional half-and-half protests made by those against whom the Pope decides, only serve to show that it was generally admitted throughout the Church, and this in the middle of the third century. It is certainly strange that we never find writers standing up for the independence of bishops until the Pope has decided against them!

But Dr. Mahan says the Papal authority came too late on the stage. The Pope was like a pilot who only comes on board when the dangerous shoals are passed, and the ship has got out into the open sea.

How does the case stand? We see the ship in comparatively smooth water shaping her course over the ocean; her pilot's voice is everywhere heard and obeyed, her crew are at their quarters, her discipline is perfect. What was the case a little earlier in her course? She was passing through a narrow channel and amidst dangerous reefs. Voices were drowned in the roar of the elements, and

confusion seemed to reign on her decks, as she bent over before the blast, now in one direction, and now in another. Through all this confusion, however, her course was plain and consistent, and showed no faltering nor indecision. We could not see any pilot or hear any voice giving orders ; are we therefore to conclude that the pilot had not come on board or had not assumed the command? Had we not better ask : Whose hand was on the tiller at each critical movement? Who gave the word of command at every dangerous crisis? If we find that the hand and voice of the same pilot, whom we afterwards saw so conspicuous, directed the ship's course on these occasions, may we not conclude that he was really in command from the beginning, though, from time to time, we were unable to see him, and he did not appear so prominent a figure as he became when the greatest danger was passed?

Let us apply all this to the Catholic Church. The centuries immediately succeeding the establishment of Christianity in the world were, theologically, her period of storms. Her theology was to be worked out, and secured, under Divine guidance indeed, but by human thought and exertion : vital errors had to be met, and the true faith promulgated with all possible energy. Council after council was called together for the work, that the whole teaching body might join in meeting the emergencies as they arose. The result of this energetic teaching was that the doctrine of the Church, as looked at in the course of history, is plain and consistent.

Now let us see who was the guiding spirit of all this vigorous and combined action? Whose hand, as we before asked, was at the helm in all the great emergencies? To



begin with, let us look at all the great councils which have been received by Christians. Can any one deny that the Pope had a most prominent part in calling these Councils and directing their decisions? In almost every case the Pope's legates presided, and it was always necessary that the decrees of the Council should be accepted by the Holy See: at any rate they were accepted and ratified by the Pope.

In the early ages all the great Councils were held in the East, and yet we find the Bishop of Rome the overruling authority. Does not this clearly prove that, through all these ages, he was the true guide and pilot of the Church. Or if that seems too much, may we not certainly say that his attitude during these times is at least consistent with the office which he is admitted to have held a little later on?

The early ages were fertile in error. Was there ever an error condemned which was not condemned by the Holy See? We have heard a great deal about Pope Honorius. He was condemned because "he did not extinguish the flame of heretical doctrine in its rise,"—but why should he have interfered at all? The heresy had risen in the Eastern Church. What had the Bishop of Rome to do with the matter, except on the supposition that he was the supreme Pastor, and that it was just as much his province to condemn error in Arabia or Asia Minor, as if it had sprung up in Italy? The fact that the Pope is ever found condemning heresy wherever it springs up, and that, moreover, the Christian world expected it of him, is clearly an indication that he was acknowledged by all to possess a much wider authority than any other bishop, to say the least of it.

A third indication of the same thing is to be found in the constant appeals to him which were made from all parts of the Church. Every bishop who was aggrieved or persecuted had recourse to the Pope; there is scarcely one of the great Patriarchs of the Eastern Church who did not, in his turn, appeal to that authority. We have, in short, abundant indications that the Pope was the guiding spirit of the Church in every crisis; we have the Pope acting, and expected to act, with authority in every part of it; we have abundant passages in the writings of the early Popes, in which they claim universal authority in the Church—and a number of corresponding passages of other Fathers, in which this claim is admitted. Can it be alleged in the teeth of all this that the “pilot came on board” when all the shoals were passed? It is true that afterwards, when the greatest questions were set at rest, and the Church was no longer shaken to her foundations, it was easier to distinguish the voice of the Chief Pastor.

When the shoals and quicksands are passed and order is restored, and the ship is now on the open sea, we can more distinctly hear the pilot’s voice; but her whole previous course plainly shows us that he was in command from the beginning.

It seems to me that too much attention is given to the controversy about the Pope’s claim to be the Head of the Church. Every Protestant controversialist makes this a point of attack, and thinks he has done a great deal by his efforts to find flaws in the evidence of the Papal Supremacy, and to explain away difficult passages of the Fathers. It is, of course, a subject of the highest possible interest, and well deserves any amount of consideration—

but, looked at controversially, it obviously comes second. The first thing to find out is, "Which *is* the true Church?" When that is settled you clearly can have no difficulty in ascertaining who is the head of it.

If you are convinced that the Roman Church is the true Church of God, you cannot for a moment doubt that the Pope is Head of the Church. If you think something else is the Church of God, then go to that other—if you can find it—and ask who is its head, and get an answer—if you can. No one can pretend to have any positive proof that the Pope is not the Head of the Church; and even if you could succeed in weakening the patristic argument for the Papacy, if you believed the Roman Church to be God's Church, it is plain that you could not resist her positive statement that the Pope is her Head, on merely negative grounds.

In short, the Church must prove the Pope, and not the Pope the Church. It is beginning at the wrong end, if you argue about the details of the Church's organization before you settle which is the Church. Therefore, I say, first decide on what you mean by the Church, agree upon its definition, and see what living body best agrees with that definition, and it will be time enough then to go into the question how that body ought to be governed.

However, as so much is said on this subject, I may as well state shortly the argument for the Pope's Supremacy—although it involves saying again what has often been said before.

But, first, I must say, it seems to me that Protestant writers take a very false and unreasonable line in the whole controversy. They say: "Such an authority as the



Papacy ought to come before men backed up by irresistible proofs." "I am inclined to smile when such trifling and ambiguous documents are produced, a few words from two or three Fathers in a century, whereas the proof of such a doctrine ought to be clearer than the sun," etc. It seems that they really consider the *onus probandi* to rest upon us, and that we have a case to make out!

Now let us look at the facts; not uncertain, dubious facts, but what is admitted by all mankind. *First*, the Pope has ruled supreme in the Christian Church for *at least* a thousand years—say from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries. No one will contest this, or deny that his claim to rule as successor of St. Peter was admitted by an overwhelming majority of Christians. Moreover, until the ninth century this supremacy was admitted by the East as well as by the West. *Secondly*, it cannot be denied that at least from the fifth century till the present day, the Pope's authority has always been acknowledged by, numerically, much the largest portion of professing Christians. *Thirdly*, in the remote and hazy history of the earliest centuries, there are a number of passages—call them "rhetorical" if you like; offer as many plausible explanations of each passage, when it appears, as you can—passages which look uncommonly like glimpses, and pretty plain glimpses, too, of the same doctrine. Such passages are to be found in every age since St. Irenæus' celebrated words in the second century: "To this Church (Rome) on account of a more powerful principality, it is necessary that every Church, that is, those who are on every side faithful, resort, in which (Church) always by those who are on every side, has been preserved that

tradition which is from the apostles," etc.,\* a passage which wants a good deal of explaining.

Such being the acknowledged facts of the case, is it not absurd to ask for "proofs," as if we were introducing a new doctrine? Proofs! Why, it is for you to prove that the Church of God has been making a fearful blunder for all these centuries. Do that, if you can, but don't ask *us* for proofs. Proofs! go and ask the Great Pyramid for a proof that it was built, or ask the House of Commons for historical evidence of its authority, before you obey the laws it makes. The House of Commons has not existed half the time that the Sovereign Pontiff has admittedly reigned.

I consider, therefore, that the contention of Protestants that they have a right to ask for proofs is false and unreasonable. The *onus probandi* is clearly on them, and it is for them to give their proofs.

I proceed, however, to give a sketch of the argument for the Papal Supremacy.

In the first place, it is clear that there are very strong passages in the Holy Scripture which seem, at any rate, to allot to St. Peter a very special and peculiar position in the Church which our Lord was to establish, and that, too, a position which was not passing, but permanent.

Our Lord compares His Church to a great building, and solemnly declares that St. Peter shall be the foundation of it. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father, Who is in Heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it" (St. Matt. xvi. 17). Now

\* "Faith of Catholics," vol. ii., p. 64.

clearly the foundation is an all-important part of a house, in virtue of which all stands, without which nothing could be. It is, moreover, not a passing thing, as a scaffolding might be, but one which must necessarily last as long as the building lasts.

Our Lord then solemnly promised to St. Peter a vitally important and most lasting function in His Church.

He moreover repeats this promise under a totally different figure of speech, which, however, expresses the same function quite as strongly: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said to him: Feed My lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs. He saith to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said to Him: Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said to him: Feed My sheep" (St. John xxi. 15-17).

Our Lord here solemnly makes him shepherd over the whole flock. No office about the flock can possibly equal in importance that of shepherd; on him obviously devolves every description of care, and every sort of control, and, as long as there is a flock, there must be a shepherd. Remove the shepherd, and the flock ceases to exist as a flock.

Here then again we have the same promise of an office of vital importance, and a permanent one, which was given in the former text. Now let us turn to the principal place where our Lord makes a promise without any figure, and



see how it corresponds. "And the Lord said: Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have *you*, that he might sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for *thee*, that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren" (St. Luke xxii. 31, 32).

Now, first, this was evidently a promise for the future, and not for the immediate future, for, in the very next verses, our Lord foretold Peter's denial, as He had else where foretold the dispersion of the apostles generally. It was, then, a prophecy and a promise for the time when the Church should be established. "Confirm his brethren"—whom does our Lord mean by "his brethren?" surely not the apostles who were to receive the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and to be scattered over the world as inspired writers and teachers: then the promise and commission must apply to Christians generally.

"On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." Such was the promise of the first text—the promise of this exactly corresponds. The most essential of all the promises given to the Church was that the power of the devil should not prevail over it, and this attribute of indefectibility was given through Peter in the last text as well as the first: "Thou being strengthened, confirm thy brethren."

If this is a most weighty promise made to Peter—that of power to confirm his brethren—it is also a most permanent one. Satan's desire to "sift us like wheat" was not a passing necessity, but one to last as long as the Church lasted. His power indeed was to increase as time went on, and the last days would need strengthening against his attacks even more than the first.

It may be objected that these attributes of "foundation," of "shepherd," and "confirmer of his brethren," essentially and necessarily belong to our Lord Himself; but this is no valid objection, because what is claimed for St. Peter is that he has these qualities as Vicar, or representative of our Lord, and this claim is obviously confirmed by our Lord's bestowing upon him the very titles which belong of right to Himself.

Hear what St. Leo says on this point in the fifth century: "Thus saith the Lord unto Simon Peter . . . I am the sure rock of defence, the Corner Stone, who make both one, I am the Foundation, beside which other can no man lay, and thou also art the Rock, in My strength made hard, and those things whereof I by right am Lord, into thy hands do I give them, that thou mayest bear rule over them, for Me and with Me. And upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Upon this strength of thine, whereof I am the strength, I will build My eternal temple, and upon the truth of thy Confession of Me I will make to rise that, My glorious Church, whose spires shall reach to heaven." ("Breviary," 8th lesson, 22nd February).

It is plain, then, I think, that in these three ways (particularly), our Lord made a solemn promise to St. Peter of a most important and permanent office in His Church.

Now, let us see how this promise was fulfilled—if it does *not* refer to the Papacy. It is quite clear that there is nothing in St. Peter's personal history which in the least fulfils it. There are, indeed, a number of circumstances in his life which correspond exceedingly well with the Catholic

idea of the office he held, but there was nothing which, in itself, at all answered to our Lord's magnificent promise. He just preached and laboured and suffered with the other apostles, and, after the first few chapters of the Acts, he almost disappears from the history.

Our Lord says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (St. Matt. xxiv. 35); and yet Protestants would have us suppose that all these magnificent promises and prophecies went absolutely for nothing!

Now let us turn to the other side of the question. Is it not true that the position of the Roman Pontiff is, beyond comparison, the most striking fact in Church history? All men must admit that the Popes have been acknowledged by the greater part of Christendom as supreme rulers, claiming to be Vicars of Christ, as successors of St. Peter, for over a thousand years, at least. No one, I think, will be bold enough to deny the fact. If this supremacy does not rest on a special office given to St. Peter, or at any rate on a very widespread conviction throughout the Church that such an authority had been given by our Lord, such a supremacy is utterly inexplicable. It is not as if a number of competitors for dominion had appeared, and after a struggle for empire, the Bishop of Rome had been victor. No other bishop has ever *claimed* to be ruler of the Church except the Bishop of Rome; there never has been a contest.

Of course I know that a number of things are suggested as giving rise to the Pope's authority, but they appear one more feeble and inadequate than another. For instance, Rome was the seat of Empire. Yes, but from the time of



the first Christian Emperor, Rome ceased to be the seat of Empire, and Constantinople took its place : the early Popes were mostly men of saintly character ; certainly, but men of saintly character and glorious martyrs were not rare in those days : indeed, it is objected that the Popes of early times were *not* men of commanding character, that they were not great writers, and that, personally, they took but little part in the theological discussions of the time ; and there are other arguments of the same kind.

We have, then, great promises of our Lord utterly unfulfilled, and the greatest fact of Church history utterly unaccounted for. Take the Catholic view of the question, however, and all is plain. No one, I think, will deny that if our Lord *did* promise to make St. Peter the permanent foundation of His Church, the permanent shepherd of His flock, and the permanent support and confirmer of his brethren, His promise is abundantly and adequately fulfilled by the continuous rule of the Roman Pontiffs, in whom the Church has constantly recognised the successors of St. Peter. Again, no one will deny that *if* the Papal authority was intended by Christ, it corresponds exactly with the words of our Lord to St. Peter ; in fact, it is difficult to think of any words in which our Lord could have conveyed such an appointment and commission more fully and precisely, if He had designed to give them.

The words of our Lord and the historical facts are both as strong as can well be imagined, but it is the accurate correspondence between them which gives them their overwhelming weight.

You find a key which fits accurately into a lock, and you

naturally suppose the key was intended to open the lock. "It was not made for the lock," says a bystander. "Perhaps not," I think you would reply, "but I shall want a strong proof that it wasn't, and not a mere surmise," and, if there was only one lock and one key in existence, you would require a very strong proof that they had nothing to do with each other.

The argument from the Fathers is so long that it can only be properly considered in a book written expressly for the purpose, and it has been so often and so ably treated that I will not attempt to enter on it here. However, I said just now that in the early ages there were "glimpses" of the Papal Supremacy to be found before the fifth century. I said this because after the fifth century the case seems to be pretty well given up by our opponents. I think they practically admit that then the Pope was Supreme Head of the Church, however he came by his power.

I think it as well to give a long passage from Cardinal Newman which explains the sort of evidence which we have before the fifth century, in order that I may not appear to underrate its cogency.

Writing in 1872, the Cardinal quotes from his own "Essay on Development" (1845), these words about the evidences for the Papacy in the first three centuries. "Faint they may be one by one, but at least they are various, and are drawn from many times and countries, and thereby serve to illustrate each other, and form a body of proof." He then goes on: "For instance, to St. Clement, one of the first successors of St. Peter, the Corinthians have recourse in their domestic dissensions,

and he, in the name of His Church, writes to them a letter of exhortation and advice ; while St. Ignatius, his contemporary, who gives his counsels freely to various churches of Asia, utters not a word of admonition in writing to the Roman Church, and calls it "the Church which has the first seat in its place."

"Again, St. Polycarp of Smyrna, in the next generation, betakes himself to the Bishop of Rome on the question of Easter ; the heretic Marcion, excommunicated in Pontus, goes off to Rome ; and we read of Soter, as observing the custom of his Church, when he sent alms to the Churches of the Empire, and as 'affectionately exhorting those who came to Rome,' in the words of Eusebius, 'as a father his children.' To Rome the Montanists came from Phrygia to gain the countenance of its Bishop ; and Praxeas, also, in order to expose them ; Pope Victor pronounces the Asian Churches excommunicate, and Irenæus, in his interposition, questions not his right, but the charity of his act. The same Saint speaks of Rome as the Church in which the Churches from every side centre, and as being pre-eminently the 'principal' Church. He says it was founded by St. Peter and St. Paul, and he prefers its tradition to that of other Churches ; Tertullian, too, says that the apostles poured out into it their whole doctrine ; and, after he was a Montanist, acknowledges, while he complains, that the Pope acted as a Pontifex Maximus and Bishop of Bishops. Pope Dionysius entertains the accusation brought by Alexandrian priests against their Bishop in a matter of doctrine ; and forthwith asks of him an explanation, which the latter grants without any protest. Cyprian speaks of Rome as 'the See of Peter and the principal Church ;



and, when he and Firmilianus withstood Pope Stephen, who maintained the validity of heretical baptism, the Pope carries his point against the Churches of Africa, Egypt, and Asia Minor. Basilides, deposed in Spain, betakes himself to Pope Stephen. Fortunatus and Felix, deposed by Cyprian, have recourse to Pope Cornelius. So much in the first three centuries.

“In the fourth, Pope Julius [A.D. 337-351], as we learn from Athanasius, remonstrates with the Arian party for ‘proceeding on their own authority,’ ‘for what we have received from the blessed Apostle Peter, that I signify to you.’ ‘Julius wrote back,’ says Socrates, ‘that they acted against the canons, because they had not called him to a council, the ecclesiastical canon commanding that the Churches ought not to make canons beside the judgment of the Bishop of Rome.’ Sozomen says, ‘It was a sacerdotal law, to declare invalid whatever was transacted beside the judgment of the Bishop of the Romans.’ The Arians themselves, whom the Pope was withstanding, were forced to confess that Rome was ‘the school of the apostles, and the metropolis of orthodoxy from the beginning.’ Pope Damasus [A.D. 366-386] calls the Eastern Bishops his ‘sons’: ‘In that your charity pays the due reverence to the Apostolic See,’ he says, ‘ye profit most yourselves, most honoured sons’; and he speaks of himself as ‘placed in the See of that holy Church, in which the holy Apostle taught how becomingly to direct the helm to which we have succeeded.’ ‘I speak,’ says St. Jerome to the same Pope, ‘with the successor of the fisherman and the disciple of the Cross. I, following no one as my chief but Christ, am associated in communion with thy blessedness, that is,

with the See of Peter. Whoso gathers not with thee, scatters.' St. Basil entreats the same Pope to send persons to settle the troubles of Asia Minor: 'We are asking nothing new,' he says, 'for we know from tradition of our fathers, and from writings preserved among us, that Dionysius,' a Pope of the third century, 'sent letters of visitation to our Church of Cæsarea, and of consolation, with ransomers of our brethern from captivity.'

"Pope Siricius [A.D. 386-398] says: 'We bear the burden of all who are laden—yea, rather the blessed Apostle Peter beareth them in us, who, as we trust, in all things protects and defends us, the heirs of his government.'

"'Diligently and congruously do ye consult the arcana of Apostolical dignity,' says Pope Innocent [A.D. 402—417] to the African Bishops, 'the dignity of him on whom, besides those things which are without, falls the care of all the Churches, following the form of the ancient rule, which you know, as well as I, has been preserved always by the whole world.' And Pope Celestine to the Bishops of Illyria [A.D. 422—432]: 'About all men we especially have anxiety, we, on whom, in the Holy Apostle Peter, Christ conferred the necessity of making all men our concern when He gave him the keys of opening and shutting.'" \*

Father Ryder may very well say: † "If the Papal Monarchy be a usurpation, and destructive of that economy which Christ meant should reign throughout His Church, at least it is undeniable that the Church from the beginning bore and fostered the germ within her. To the Bishop of Rome all may appeal, and from

\* "Essays, Critical and Historical," vol. ii., p. 324.

† Quoted by Cardinal Newman, "Essays," vol. ii., p. 323.

him none. He is the judge of all, whom none may judge. Every corner of the vineyard is open to him, who is its guardian, whenever the faith or peace of the Church is in danger. No canon avails without his sanction ; and it is for him to interpret the canons according to the exigencies of time and circumstance. What the ancient Church does not claim for the Pope, she allows him to claim for himself. Restrictive laws seem to have been made for others, not for him. Patriarchs, the most ancient and august, are keenly criticised, and sharply rebuked, if they speak proud things, or interfere with even the humblest of their neighbours ; the Bishop of Rome alone, it seems, cannot exalt himself above his rightful place, or intrude where he is not due. If he is rebuked, it is by heretics like the Eusebians, whom he detects and punishes ; or if a saint says a sharp word, the Church lets it fall to the ground, as if he knew not what he said."

It seems perfectly clear that from the beginning the Pope claimed jurisdiction over the whole Church, and that no counter-claim was made by any other bishop. Great titles have occasionally been claimed by other bishops—such as the claim to be called "Universal Bishop," which was withstood by St. Gregory, of which we have heard so much—but I do not think it can be maintained that any other bishop ever seriously pretended to have the supreme rule over the Church.

Why was this? The bishops of those days were not wanting in ambition, and every bishop would naturally be anxious to advance the dignity of his own see. It can only be accounted for by the deep-seated feeling and tradition that the successor of St. Peter, and he alone, had received from our Lord authority to superintend the whole Church.



There is not the slightest sign that the Pope's claim to supremacy was ever rejected by the Church. There is an abundance of strong passages, which any one may find, explicitly admitting that claim ; but where can you find any protest against it? By protest, I mean any plain statement that the Bishop of Rome is no more than any other patriarch or bishop, and has no right to interfere with other bishops. Does any one attempt to answer the Pope, as we should answer the Archbishop of Paris, for instance, if he interfered with our English bishops? or as the Episcopal Church of America would answer the Archbishop of Canterbury if he were to send his commands to them?

Of course there was plenty of grumbling. When the Holy See decided against people, they did not like it then, any more than they do now. A great many people who are, in theory, extremely loyal to the Pope, consider it very hard when he condemns their favourite views, and easily find excuses for some degree of disobedience, and say disloyal things—in short, they grumble. Men always did so, and will do so until we are all saints. Happily, however, there is a very wide gap between grumbling and deliberate rebellion. It is easy to find plenty of grumbling, but very hard to find real rebellion.

Of course there was rebellion sometimes, but—this I think an important point—those who rebelled, remained ever after cut off from the body of the Church. I am not talking of mere ebullitions of temper, and passing misunderstandings, but of real permanent rejection of the Pope's authority : in no case has any body of men cast off the Pope's authority and remained members of the Catholic

Church. Could anything show more conclusively that the Papal Supremacy has been fully accepted by the Church of God?

I will conclude my sketch of the argument for the Papal Supremacy with this remark. Those who assert that the Papal rule was not the government intended by our Lord for His Church, ought to be able to show what was the intended government. A mere negation of a great theory is not much good, unless you are prepared to put another in the place of it. Now, has any other scheme of government for the whole Church ever been seriously suggested? Is any other possible, which can be made in any way to fit into the acknowledged facts of history?

I suppose our opponents would admit that our Lord intended His Church to be ruled somehow. When He said: "There shall be one fold, and one shepherd," He clearly meant that there should be some form of government in the Church He was to establish. But there is no vestige, either in Scripture or history, of any other scheme for the government of the Church, so that the choice is between the Papacy and—nothing.

After this long digression I must come back to my author, and treat of a difficulty which Dr. Mahan and others seem to consider a formidable one. It is that Papal Infallibility was defined at so late a period in the Church's history. "The nature of this Infallibility," they say, "should be no questionable thing." How can we "receive what we know to be true only on the authority of a witness whose authority is not *de fide*?" I do not think that there is any real difficulty. The doubt about the Pope's personal Infallibility, as far as there ever was a doubt, was purely a speculative

one, and never had any practical effect. It was always most strictly *de fide*, and, indeed, the authoritative rule of faith—that the Pope's teaching, accepted by the Catholic Church, was infallible. All the doctrines which the Holy See asked Christians to receive were accepted by the Church, so that the duty of receiving them was not affected by the question whether the Infallible authority which decided them was the decision of the Pope in itself, or the decision of the Pope confirmed by the acceptance of the Church.

What would happen if the Pope's decrees about faith were rejected by the Church is a purely speculative question. Those who taught the personal infallibility of the Pope always maintained that such a thing could never happen: at any rate, it never *has* happened. When Dr. Mahan asks how we can receive the Nicene Creed upon the authority of an infallible teacher whose credentials and authority are not so well defined and proved as the truth of the Creed itself, the answer is obvious. The Nicene Creed was accepted, in the first instance, on the authority of the Pope, united in faith with the body of the Church; and it always has rested, and still rests, on the same authority. The definition of the Papal Infallibility does not make the smallest difference.

Dr. Mahan concludes by saying that the Roman Infallibility comes before men with four special marks. These, he tells us, are: 1. The division between the East and the West. 2. The stain of bloodshed. 3. The deification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. 4. The "childish and almost heathenish frivolity in all parts of the earth that are subject to the Roman sway."

It is perhaps desirable to speak of the first of these points. It is not true that the division between the East



and the West was occasioned by the "growth of absolutism." It was not the result of any special claim on the Pope's part to supremacy, but proceeded from the jealousy and hatred of the Easterns against the Western nations, which grew stronger as the East declined in power. The Eastern Church had no particular grievance, but had to invent causes of disagreement, because the feeling of the people compelled them to separate. For example, no exercise of authority at that time can be produced at all to be compared in peremptoriness with the conduct of St. Leo the Great at the Council of Chalcedon. On that occasion he not only presided by his Legates, but he sent a definition of the true faith, which the Fathers of the Council were not to *discuss*, but to *accept*.

Does Dr. Mahan mean that the secession of a large number of bishops is sufficient to destroy the Church? or, if not to destroy it, at least to paralyze it, so that it can no longer perform the functions of a Church? If so, the Church is plainly established in such a manner as necessarily to break down the first time it has any serious work to do. On this theory the Church, in fact, ceased to exist, or to be in a position to do anything, from the first General Council. It cannot, I imagine, be denied that the great Arian heresy drew away from the unity of the Church a very large proportion of the then existing Catholic bishops. Whole nations became Arian and remained so for ages. Does Dr. Mahan assert that this was sufficient to render null the proceedings of the Council of Nicæa and all the councils that came after it? If not, why should the secession of a number of Eastern bishops, later on, nullify the action of the Church? The same is

exemplified in the Eutychian heresy. Every one knows how very large a portion of the Church was infected by this heresy and by it withdrawn from the centre of unity, and, moreover, that the division has continued down to the present day. Did the secession of the Monophysites annul the Council of Chalcedon?

People sometimes talk as if the "division of the East from the West" was something quite unique and unheard of; whereas, in fact, every great heresy from the commencement of Christianity has occasioned similar divisions. The "Eastern Church" is, after all, merely a series of national Churches with no bond of union amongst themselves, and united in nothing except in rejecting the Pope's authority. From the time of separation, moreover, there have always been portions of the Eastern Church which have kept up communion with the Holy See.

I do not think it necessary to say much about the other things mentioned by Dr. Mahan. The "stain of bloodshed in wars and persecutions" is no doubt greatly to be deplored, but I think the time has passed when this can calmly be put down as a peculiarity of the Roman Church, or as occasioned by the "growth of absolutism." The "deification of the Blessed Virgin Mary" is a term which Dr. Mahan has introduced into the controversy without producing one shadow of justification from the words of any Catholic author, and only shows how little he understands the belief or practice of the Church.

The charge of "childish and heathenish frivolity" is one of a class which it is difficult or impossible to meet. When controversialists begin to apply such terms as "childish," "heathenish," and "frivolous," to their

adversaries *passim*, it is a sure sign that the controversy has reached its natural termination. There is plenty of childishness, frivolity, heathenism, and so forth, in Catholic countries, and so, I am afraid, there is here. It is the very work of religion to fight against the wickedness of human nature, but much evil will ever remain in spite of it. It is extremely difficult to know enough of the habits of other nations to be able to tell how much there is of real frivolity, and how much there is that offends us simply because we do not understand it and it is unlike our ways. It is certainly a very bold thing to pronounce such a sweeping censure upon "all parts of the earth that are subject to the Roman sway."



## CHAPTER VII

### ANGLICAN AND ROMAN THEORIES

Analogy to science—The “three-fold nature of man”—“Truly Catholic” and “Papal” doctrines—“Counterpoise to the pulpit”—“Creature worship”—Jewish Church—“Paternal guidance”—Apostolic teaching—The “act of Baptism”—Grounds of faith—“Universal Supremacy”—What is the Church?—“Unity of acquiescence”—A “four-squared basis”—The “Private interpretationist.”

**D**R. MAHAN concludes his objections by contrasting the “Anglican and Roman Theories.”

He thinks that the Roman System is not in “accordance with the three-fold nature of man” that it is not protected by the counterpoise of a well-digested liturgy so that ignorance is not an accident but a “logical necessity” in Catholic countries—that there is a “broad distinction between those doctrines which are truly Catholic, and those which are merely Papal.”

He thinks also that the manner of teaching in the Roman Church is not consistent “with the types of Church Government which we possess in the Word of God,” and that it is not a parental government. If there is vagueness in the Anglican system, he considers there is at least as much in the government of the Roman Church, and that, moreover, it introduces an element of lawlessness by removing the Church from “the broad four-squared

basis of twelve apostolic foundations, and setting it upon the narrow pinnacle of one."

Let us consider these difficulties in order, and see whether Dr. Mahan is able to make any objections to the Roman system which do not apply, quite as strongly, to the position which he himself holds.

The first difficulty is that the way of learning religion is not analogous to the way in which we learn other things. Is this a valid objection, supposing it to be true? Dr. Mahan himself has pointed out, what is sufficiently manifest, that no strict analogy can be expected between the acquisition of knowledge which professedly comes by direct revelation from God, and knowledge which is derived only from human reason and experience. We should expect, *a priori*, that there would be a vast difference in the principles on which these two kinds of knowledge are to be learned. But is it so? Is there no analogy between religion, as taught by the Catholic Church, and a human science? It seems to me that, *mutatis mutandis*, there is a close and striking analogy. In human science there is always something fixed for a basis, something which can always be used as a test and correction to theory. You have documents which can be referred to, or experiments which can be repeated; you can see and touch and examine, and so, at every stage, confirm or reject your scientific theories. If it were not so, science would lose itself in endless speculation and division.

In religion you cannot have experiment from the nature of the subject-matter, but you must have something to supply its place, if you are to have any science at all—and this can be nothing but authority.

To carry out the analogy, moreover, you must have an authority which can be appealed to again and again, as new questions arise, that is to say, a living authority. Each step in science is confirmed or rejected by fresh appeals to fact, by fresh experiments, by new researches, and so forth, so there must be an authority to which appeal can be made when necessary, if there is to be any science of theology. The place of such an authority is not supplied by the Holy Scriptures. They are undoubtedly susceptible of a number of interpretations. No fresh facts can be got from them, and no light beyond what has been before our eyes for centuries. Science could not go on, if all its data were certain experiments which had been already tried, on the bearing of which men disputed; there must be a power of getting fresh decisions of authority (of some kind) at every step, and the only thing analogous to this in religion is a living authority.

It is the want of such an authority that renders all theological controversies amongst Protestants so endless and so vague: they have not got those fixed points which are an essential condition of any scientific discussion. In the Catholic Church, on the other hand, there is a great science of theology, because there are a number of fixed points and principles on which all are agreed; and there is an authority always at hand to keep theory from losing sight of these principles. Those who are out of the Church will, naturally, call in question the soundness of these principles, but I do not think any one acquainted with the subject can deny that there *is* a science of theology, having a very close analogy to other sciences.

We are told we "ought to test one witness by another:"



so we do. No one can read any Catholic theology without seeing that there is a perpetual discussion carried on, and that every subject is most carefully argued out. Constant appeals are made to Scripture and tradition: the Fathers and the Councils are cited, and claimed, on this side, or on that, over a vast field of theory and of argument. It is, indeed, acknowledged, on all sides, that no one must pass the boundaries laid down by the Church; but there is plenty of room for discussion within those boundaries, and the Holy See is by no means inclined to interfere unnecessarily by fresh decisions. It never does so, indeed, as a general rule, until a decision is plainly necessary for the welfare of the Church.

Dr. Mahan considers that it is inconsistent with the three-fold nature of man to listen to one single infallible voice. But if one reason is sufficient, why does the nature of man require more? Surely the whole of this argument is simply begging the question. He thinks that an infallible voice is inconsistent with nature, that it keeps mankind in childhood, that it renders ignorance a logical necessity, that it requires a "Jesuit priesthood," a "priestly caste," and so forth. But will Dr. Mahan, or any one else, gravely maintain that, if God has really given a revelation of the truth by one infallible teacher, it can be otherwise than in accordance with the "three-fold nature" of man to accept it? or that ignorance and "absence of mental culture" are a "logical necessity" for accepting it? If it were perfectly clear that certain revelations came from God (in whatever way they came), and were undoubtedly true, how could the nature of man object to receiving them, except by sheer self-will? How can knowledge or cultivation (unless them-

selves false) put a difficulty in the way of accepting the truth?

The argument plainly assumes that the Church's claim to teach is unfounded, and her doctrine false ; that is, it begs the whole question. Without this assumption, the argument is absurd. The difficulty, such as it is, moreover, applies to *all* teaching equally. Those who think it false can always say that is only ignorance, or prejudice, or want of education, which make people believe it. There is not a word of Dr. Mahan's objection which may not be turned against himself by those who differ from him.

Dr. Mahan tries, it is true, to draw a "broad distinction" between "those doctrines which are truly Catholic and those which are merely Papal"; between the "articles of the Creed which the Church has everywhere received and the additions which have been sanctioned by the Council of Trent. Of what he considers to be the doctrines which are truly Catholic, he says: "We feel and know that whoever searches Scripture, not with 'private interpretation,' but with a meek submission of his mind to those rules of evidence which are stamped upon human nature, and which it is necessary to observe in every question of truth; such a person, by God's help, will inevitably be led to a firm belief in the Triune God whom we worship."

This, again, is evidently begging the question. All those who believe more than he considers to be the "truly Catholic" articles of faith, deny that a broad line, or any line at all, can be drawn; and those who do not accept those truths, deny that they necessarily follow from Holy Scripture "by the rules of evidence which are stamped upon human nature."

He instances the Divinity of our Lord: but can any one say that no other possible view could have been taken of the question than that which the Church did actually adopt? Is it not an undoubted fact of history, not only that other views could be held, but that a very large body of learned men did hold an opposite opinion? Every one knows that there was a tremendous controversy and a great schism. So far from the definition of our Lord's Divinity being a thing which necessarily and inevitably followed according to the "rules of evidence," it was an act of the strictest and most authoritative teaching—and the question was one which nothing but a divinely appointed teacher could ever have settled.

Dr. Mahan admits that in the Anglican system, as well as the Roman, the mass of the people must hear the truth "according to the interpretation of the appointed teachers." He thinks, however, that a great difference of principle is made by having "a well digested liturgy" in the vulgar tongue, as a "counterpoise" to the influence of the pulpit. The mass of men, he says, have neither time nor inclination for private study of the Scriptures, and, therefore, "a Church truly Catholic takes care that it shall be heard, as well as commended." I can quite understand his being attached to an English liturgy, but it seems strange that he should erect the possession of it into a note of the Church, especially considering its sufficiently modern origin, and that he should consider the Scripture lessons which the "mass of men" hear on Sundays sufficient to enable them to sit on judgment on their teachers, and to find a "counterpoise" to the influence of the pulpit.

It always has been, and is now, the desire of the Catholic



Church to put the Scriptures before her children, and to explain them on suitable occasions—not “as a counterpoise” to her own teaching, but as the written Word of God, which it is her province to explain. Would Dr. Mahan venture to say that this can be done in one way only—by having the liturgy in the vernacular? Or would he venture to condemn that very large proportion of Christians amongst whom for ages the liturgy has not been celebrated in the vulgar tongue?

Dr. Mahan thinks that the Church buries the liturgy in an unknown language, because she does not think it proper to change the venerable forms which have come down to her from remote antiquity into numberless modern and changing dialects. It may be very convenient for an exclusively English-speaking Church to use the English language, but it would not be convenient to the mother of so many nations as the Catholic Church to adopt a corresponding number of languages for her liturgy. At the same time, as surely Dr. Mahan must know, every one, of the least education, can very easily become familiar with it by the means of translations. As for very ignorant and simple people, I am afraid that they would comprehend but little of it whether in Latin or in English; the style and ideas are beyond them. Let us ask, however, which liturgy really attracts the poor most? I think any one who ever has been abroad, or in Ireland, or has seen much of our churches here, will be compelled to admit that a common “Low Mass” is far more numerously attended by the poor, and heard with far greater devotion than any “vernacular” service that can be found. Sunday and week-day all the year through, the churches are attended by all classes, poor

as well as rich, in numbers which the "well-digested" ritual of the Church of England has never been able to attract—for any length of time, at any rate.

Protestants have a Gospel and Epistle every Sunday, which are substantially the same as those in the Missal. In the Catholic Church this Epistle and Gospel are generally read to the people in English, and, as a rule, form the text of the instructions given to the congregation. To be sure the Church of England reads chapters of the Bible at different services, which, in some respects, may be an advantage—but does Dr. Mahan really think that the chapters read on Sundays to ordinary congregations,—farm labourers, peasantry, and people generally—are sufficient to enable them to pass judgment on the sermons preached to them? If so, he must have a delightfully high idea of their powers of attention, memory, and intellect.

He says, moreover, that the Roman Church teaches "a system of creature worship," which is plainly contrary to the teaching of the Bible, and that it would be impossible for a person to read the Bible and yet hearken to a "teacher, however great his authority might be, without some misgivings"; and, therefore, that "ignorance is not an accident, but a logical necessity," and that an "acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures would inevitably lead to a modification of the present Roman system, if not an entire revolution" (p. 79).

This is a charmingly naïve way of putting the subject. Can he possibly have been ignorant that all the apparent difficulties presented by passages of Scripture have been carefully, learnedly, and exhaustively considered, not once or twice, but hundreds of times over, by Catholic theo-

logians? and that all moderately well-informed Catholics are perfectly acquainted both with the difficulties (when they are of importance) and their explanation? Does not Dr. Mahan know that Catholics, though not denying that there are occasional apparent difficulties in the way of any system, are perfectly convinced that the only system which agrees with all Scripture, is the faith of the Catholic Church—which is indeed the only key to an understanding of Holy Scripture? It is intelligible enough that he should not agree to this view of the case, and should set up his private opinion against the Church: but it is really astounding that he should not even appreciate that the Catholic Church has a view of its own on the matter.

Dr. Mahan next objects to the Catholic system that it is not analogous to the Jewish Church, and that it is not a “paternal guidance.” There are very sufficient reasons why the analogy between the Jewish Dispensation and the Christian Church should be very far from complete.

The Jewish Church was not intended to teach all nations, and was not to endure to the end of the world. Its special object was to keep alive the belief in the one true God, and to keep His worship before the eyes of men by a visible establishment and system of sacrifice. It was not intended to explain the truths of faith to men, but to keep mankind in a state of preparation for One who was to come and teach them all truth. It was, moreover, ruled by a special and peculiar Providence, and directed from time to time by prophets sent from God.

We cannot expect such an institution to have any close analogy with the new system established by our Lord, in which His apostles are sent to teach all nations. We do



not, I suppose, know exactly how far the teaching powers of the Jewish priests extended, and whether they were, strictly speaking, infallible ; but, at any rate, our Lord says : "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All things, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do." It is true that He blamed them greatly—not, I think, for what we should now call false doctrine, but for allowing themselves, in practice, to be led away by vanity and envy, and by foolish maxims and traditions.

But if the Jewish Church is not quite like the Roman system, has it any analogy at all with the Anglican idea of a Church? that is, with a body scattered throughout the world, with no distinct visible principle of union, with no sort of internal organization, and no recognised head or system of government? Surely, if anything was characteristic of the Jewish Church, it was its visible union and systematic government.

But Dr. Mahan says it is not a "paternal guidance," because a father "desires his children to listen to reason," and "instead of the one strong chain of simple hearing, he is willing to attach his children to himself by a multiplicity of cords, taking hold upon the mind, as well as upon the heart and conscience." True ; but does not a father step in with authority whenever it is necessary for the good of his children? He may argue and advise as much as you will, but when his children are in danger of destruction, he must interfere authoritatively, or he neglects his duty. This is precisely what the Catholic Church does. She encourages her children to make the deepest possible study of her teaching, to exercise both mind and heart in it, but, when there is any serious danger to faith, she comes in with her

authoritative voice, and tells them what they must believe. Would it be more a "paternal guidance" if she looked on calmly when their reasons were leading them astray, and did not say one authoritative word to direct them? It is true the merit of faith consists in submission of the understanding to the authority of God, but it does not follow that it is less perfect because it is accompanied by an exact knowledge of the subject, and of the grounds of the faith. On the contrary, the more the powers of intellect are brought to bear, the more precious is the "obedience of faith."

Again Dr. Mahan says, "The absolutism of infallible guidance is not consistent with the apostolic mode of teaching." It is not easy to see exactly what he means by this. St. Paul gives a specimen of what *he* means by apostolic teaching when he says to St. Timothy: "Preach the Word, be instant, in season and out of season, reprove, entreat, rebuke, in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables. Be thou vigilant, labour in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry" (2 Tim. iv. 2—5), and in another place: "These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth" (1 Tim. iv. 11, 12). Is not this precisely what the Church has done in all ages, and is now doing?

Is it an "absolutism" inconsistent with the apostolic type that the Church does not allow her children to disregard her teaching? If, after all reasonings and exhortations, St. Paul's disciples had thought that they knew

better than he did, and had declined to accept his doctrine, what would he have done? would he have given way or would he have been "absolute"?

At any rate, Dr. Mahan thinks three things stare us in the face during the early ages. "1. That during the whole of this long period there was no single test of truth which the private Christian could apply with infallible certainty. 2. That everything proved and settled during this long period, was proved by most certain warrant of Holy Scripture. 3. That no article was determined as *de fide* which was not implied in the very act of Baptism into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

I should be inclined to give a totally different version of these facts, and say :

1. That the private Christian had exactly the same guide that he now has. He had then to follow the teaching of the ordinary pastors of the Church, subject to the correction of the chief pastors, when need required and opportunity permitted : that those pastors, with the Bishop of Rome at their head, decided disputed points just as peremptorily as the Church now does, and allowed no one to dispute their authority. The Church then had no rule of faith but obedience to the teaching of her constituted pastors, and she exacted this obedience from all, on pain of being cut off from her communion.

Let us ask for example : How does the conduct of the Church at the Council of Trent, or the Vatican Council, differ from the mode of proceeding at the Council of Nicæa? How can it be said that when the decrees of the Council of Nicæa were made known to men, the "private Christian" had no infallible test of truth? Every such decision of the



Church was a test of truth, after it had once been made known. Such tests of truth were multiplied in the course of ages; the way was more clearly marked out, but the principle on which the private Christian of the first ages found out his faith was identical with that in use amongst Christians at the present day.

2. Everything was then decided consistently with the teaching of Holy Scripture. The faith was founded on the teaching of Scripture as understood, explained, and supplemented by the Church's living voice. It is plain, however, that it was not confined to what could be proved from Scripture in such a way as not to admit of any doubt. A large number of men, in fact, not only doubted, but rejected the decision of the Church, and were in consequence cut off from her communion. No one, I think, can seriously maintain that the doctrines of the Church about our Lord as defined against the Arians, Nestorians, Eutychians, and so forth, were so clearly laid down in Holy Scripture as to leave no room for difference of opinion. Again, on the subject of grace, can any one say that there was no room for the error of the Pelagians? When these doctrines were once settled by the Church, the faith was plain enough; but if there had been no authoritative voice to decide, there would have been plenty of room for divergence. The decisions of the early Church, therefore, were in accordance with the teaching of Holy Scripture in precisely the same sense as the later ones, and in no other.

3. The "act of Baptism into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," is an act by which men accept the Christian faith, and, in that sense, implies believing all that the Christian faith teaches. If you know what the Christian

faith is, you know what Baptism implies. In any other sense, I do not see that it implies the doctrines of the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed any more than it implies the doctrines of the Council of Trent or the Vatican Council.

Dr. Mahan follows with this rather strange suggestion, that, "having this three-fold witness, the Creed may be received by different persons, and at different periods of life, on either or all of these grounds. One may receive it because he has been taught it by that branch of the Church which is his spiritual mother; another because he has read it in the Bible; a third because he finds it to be warranted by universal consent" (p. 87).

Can such wavering and changeful opinions be called faith at all? To-day you believe a thing because it is taught you; to-morrow you cease to believe on this ground—that is, you give up your confidence in what you supposed was the Church of God, and believe in your own private interpretation of the Bible; at another time you give up this also, and believe on the strength of some private historical views of your own as to universal consent. If you are at liberty to change your grounds of faith in this manner, is it not the most complete form of private judgment?

It is obvious that the "grounds of faith" must be those grounds on which our Lord meant the faith to rest. Can any one believe that He meant the grounds of His faith to be perpetually changing, and that there should be no one pillar and ground of truth, but that each individual should stand on his own ground, one of authority, another of private judgment, and so forth?

If God meant us to depend upon a three-fold guidance, as Dr. Mahan would have us believe—*i.e.* on the teaching of the Church in which we happen to find ourselves, and our own interpretation of the Scriptures, and on what we consider to be universal consent—there can be no faith unless all these grounds of belief concur. You would have no right to suppress any of them, but must wait till your own opinion coincided with the teaching of the Church before you could have any faith at all.

Dr. Mahan here introduces a protest against the “Papal claim of universal supremacy in things temporal and spiritual,” an assumption which, he tells us, “Pope Gregory the Great most explicitly denounced as Satanical and anti-Christian.”

This refers to a very old story which has many times been discussed and answered.

St. Gregory undoubtedly denounced the assumption of the Patriarch of Constantinople in calling himself Universal Bishop, and declared that his predecessors had never accepted such a title, though it had been offered to them. For the first part, it is clear that the Patriarch of Constantinople had no claim to any sort of universal jurisdiction; and, as to the last, St. Gregory gives the reason, that it is a proud and ambitious title, and, moreover, that it would seem to imply that essentially there is but one bishop in the Church; whereas the episcopacy, or union of many bishops, is clearly of Divine institution. Writing on the subject to the Bishop of Thessalonica, he says, “If one is universal, it remains that you are not bishop.”

What follows from all this? Can we infer that because on these grounds he rejected the title of “Universal



Bishop," he therefore repudiated the notion that the Pope had any jurisdiction over other bishops, or out of his own diocese? If not, to what purpose is it quoted? The plain question then is, Did St. Gregory himself, and his predecessors and successors, claim and exercise supreme jurisdiction over the Church, never mind by what name they called it?

The letters of the Popes from the time of St. Siricius, 384 A.D., are extant, and there is scarcely one of them who does not, in the plainest words, claim the right to interfere everywhere, and who does not declare, as a ground for this right, that he has the charge of the whole Church. There is scarcely one of the Popes who did not, in fact, interfere in a peremptory manner in the affairs of the local Churches in both East and West. One of the chief things we know about St. Gregory is that he established the Hierarchy in England. That does not look much as if he repudiated any authority out of his own See. The very fact of his writing to call the Patriarch of Constantinople to account implies that he considered himself to have a right to interfere. In the very letter referred to, he says that his predecessor, Pelagius, had "dissolved the Acts of the Council" because of the title assumed by the Patriarch. How could he do so without claiming to have authority? In a letter to Eusebius, referring to the Council called by the Patriarch of Constantinople, he says: "Although whatever is done has no force without the authority and consent of the Apostolic See." Is not that claiming jurisdiction?

The attitude assumed by the Holy See, in word and action, during these centuries can only be ascertained by a

careful study of the drift of the actions and writings of the Popes and other Fathers of the period. The subject has been treated at length many times by Mr Allies, Father Botalla, and many others. If their conclusions are to be refuted, it must be by a correspondingly detailed treatment of the subject; and it is idle to imagine that any conclusion can be come to by dwelling on an isolated expression of St. Gregory or any other Father.

Dr. Mahan sums up the difference between his view and that of the Roman Church in these words: "In this regard the only question between us and the Romanists is, 'What is the Church?' We contend that it is that large body extending through East and West, and worshipping God in all languages, which rests upon many Apostolic stones, and has no centre nor head but Christ. They narrow it down to communion with the Roman See, to worshippers in the Latin tongue, and to holders of a visible Head and centre" (p. 93).

Before considering the claims of "that large body," however, another question arises: *Is* there any such body? Is there a multitude of men "extending through East and West, worshipping God in all languages, and resting upon many Apostolic stones," which can in any reasonable sense be called a body or association of any kind? If so, who compose it? Do the Catholics?—do the Greeks?—do Protestants? How can any corporate body be formed of members who protest against belonging to it? How can there be any association between people who entirely differ as to the terms of association? How can those be united in one religious body who are completely at variance as to what are the truths necessary to be believed?

Catholics protest that they are not members of any such body as Dr. Mahan describes, and emphatically deny that any such body exists. Every word and action of the Church is a distinct condemnation of such a view. So does the Greek Church, so do Protestants generally. What proportion of the supposed members of the supposed body agree with Dr. Mahan in thinking that any such body exists? We do not, indeed, deny that there are numbers of people all over the world worshipping God in all languages, consisting of such as are in good faith, who are in a certain sense included in the Church. Such people may be admitted, by God's mercy, to a share of the blessings granted to the Church; but they certainly do not form one visible body, and they are externally excluded from that Church on earth to which our Lord made His promises and entrusted His gifts.

Before arguing, therefore, on the rights and claims of this "large body," Dr. Mahan ought to bring forward some proof of its existence. At present no one in the world believes it to exist except a small party of the Church of England, and these are unable to define, or cannot agree in defining, who are the members of it, what are the conditions of membership, how it is organized, or any of those things which it is essential to know about any corporate body existing amongst men.

Dr. Mahan says that we "narrow down" the Church to communion with Rome. If a Church or any institution is to be a visible body on earth, it *must* be "narrowed down" to some visible conditions. You cannot have a visible body at all without some visible and tangible condition of membership.



What are the conditions necessary for union with the Church according to Dr. Mahan? He speaks of those who "hold to the Catholicity of the Church and its unity on the basis of an Apostolic ministry." Does this mean that he "narrows down" the Church to those who attach the same meaning to "Catholicity" and "unity" that he himself does? If so, he narrows the Church into very small limits indeed; if not, the words seem to have no particular meaning.

The boundaries within which the Catholic faith confines the Church are, at any rate, clear and intelligible, of undeniable standing in history, and of reasonable extent. I do not know why Dr. Mahan should speak of "worshippers in the Latin tongue." He can hardly have been ignorant that there is scarcely an Oriental language which is not represented in the liturgy of the Catholic Church.

It is a pity that Dr. Mahan should have been driven, by the exigencies of his position, to talk of the unity amongst Catholics as a "unity of acquiescence rather than of active and intelligent consent." It is difficult to see what this can mean when said of bishops and priests, at any rate, unless it means in plain English that, whereas they declare before God and man that they believe certain truths, in reality they do *not* believe them. Seven hundred bishops at the Vatican Council solemnly declare certain truths to be articles of the Catholic faith; bishops, with their clergy, at their synods habitually swear on the Gospels that they accept and believe these truths; and Catholic writers, clergy, and laity are perpetually asserting the same belief; and yet people outside the Church, who know nothing in

the world about the matter, and have not a particle of evidence to produce, consider themselves justified in calmly stating that Catholics do not believe their own professions. It is plain that this is simply an *à priori* view of the matter. Dr. Mahan and such writers think that it must be so, and therefore, without a shadow of proof, they do not hesitate to say that it *is* so.

The present is certainly a very bad time to talk about the unity of the Church as a "political, rather than spiritual unity," and for saying that the Church is kept together by the "pressure of some overpowering force," considering that every external, political influence in the world is, at this moment, exerted against the union of the Catholic Church. Whilst no external pressure can keep the Anglican Church in any sort of doctrinal union, the Catholic Church remains one, in spite of all efforts to break it in pieces.

One is sorry to hear such a writer as Dr. Mahan talk of "infidelity" ministering at the Church's altars "as is abundantly shown at such times of commotion as the Reformation or the French Revolution" (p. 95). I suppose in every violent persecution a certain number will always fall away; but I think every impartial person will admit that, as a rule, the French clergy behaved with great heroism during the Reign of Terror in France. The clergy were required to take an oath to the civil Constitution on pain of losing their livings, and being prosecuted as disturbers of the public peace. Alzog says: "Of the three hundred ecclesiastical deputies, about eighty consented to take the required oath . . . of the one hundred and thirty-six bishops, only four were to be found faithless to their

trust. . . . At least fifty of the sixty thousand pastors and vicars then in France absolutely refused to take the oath. . . . The King was shortly after deposed and imprisoned, and the decree against the clergy carried out in its extremest rigour. Although six hundred priests had been slaughtered at Avignon by the soldiers of Jourdan, the beheader, they still heroically refused to take the oath. . . . They massacred, amid scenes of revolting barbarity, three hundred ecclesiastics, including one archbishop and two bishops. The atrocities perpetrated at Paris were repeated at Meaux, Chalons, Rennes, and Lyons" (Alzog's "Universal Church History," vol. iv. pp. 118—120).

A vast number of exiled priests were to be found in England at the beginning of the century, and to the present day many of the Catholic missions bear testimony to their zeal and piety. Dr. Mahan may remember that Macaulay calls attention to the fact that, of the countries which fell away at the Revolution, all returned to the Roman obedience, and none could be induced to receive Christianity in any other shape. That does not seem to agree with Dr. Mahan's theory that people are kept in her communion by an external despotism.

The reproach does not come very well from a member of a body which, whatever may be its good qualities, has not as yet produced any great number of martyrs. Let us see what will happen if a storm like the French Revolution falls on the Church of England; in the meantime, let us not be too hard on those who may have been found wanting when called on to resist "even unto blood," since we do not know how we should ourselves behave in time of trial.



Dr. Mahan has a great deal to say about the violence of the Ultramontane and Gallican controversies, and the vagueness of the Roman Church, which allows every grade "between the rigid Ultramontane," etc., but the question really is this: Was there ever a time when any member of the Roman Church could refuse to accept the Pope's decree concerning faith or morals, and still remain a Catholic? Certainly not; and this is well shown by the whole Jansenist controversy. The errors of the Jansenists were condemned by decree after decree, driven, as it were, from point to point by the supreme judgment of the Holy See, and by that alone. Of course, in times of excitement, people were not always obedient and loyal; sometimes they evaded on one pretext or another, or ignored these decrees for a time; but no one ever ventured to profess that he was not bound by them, because they were not decrees of a General Council. Any one who had ventured to do so, would at once have been cut off from the Church. There might have been some latitude for speculative opinions as to how, why, and when, in the abstract, the Pope's decrees were infallible, but there never was any latitude, even in the extreme Gallican view, as to the duty of at once accepting them, in the concrete, whenever they were issued and tacitly accepted by the Church.

But the Roman theory introduces an "element of lawlessness." "It removes the Church from the broad, four-squared basis of twelve apostolic foundations, and sets it upon the narrow pinnacle of one" (p. 94). "The broad, four-squared basis;" this sounds very nice, and one would be glad to understand the meaning of it. Is it only a poetical way of saying that the Anglican Church rests on

scripture? The apostles, or at least six of them, were amongst the writers of Scripture: the Anglican Church rests on Scripture, or thinks it does, therefore on the "four-squared basis?" I think, however, that there is some deeper meaning. Not long since I had a controversial diagram sent me as a circular. It represented a pyramid resting on its apex, which was supposed to be the Roman Church "set upon the narrow pinnacle of *one*" apostolic foundation; to which was contrasted another pyramid—in its usual position—representing the Church of England standing on its "broad, four-squared basis."

I should like to know in what sense the Church of England can be said to rest on "twelve apostolic foundations." Certainly not historically. I suppose that Church—or at least the Catholic Church in this country, of which it claims to be the continuation—was founded by St. Augustine, sent here by Pope St. Gregory, and no other "apostolic foundation" has supported it from that day to this. There are indeed no other "Apostolic foundations" existing in this world, except perhaps the Church of Jerusalem, which may possibly be derived from St. James, who was the first Bishop of the Holy City. The Church of Jerusalem, however, has always held an inferior position. The great patriarchates of the Church were Antioch and Alexandria, which claimed their rank from their connection with St. Peter since Antioch was the city in which St. Peter placed his first episcopal throne, and Alexandria was founded and governed by St. Mark, his disciple. To these were added, at a later date, the patriarchate of Constantinople, which certainly claimed no apostolic origin.

St. Innocent writes, almost within the fourth century (A.D. 402 was the date of his election): "We note that this privilege was given to Antioch, not so much on account of the city's magnificence, as because it is known to be the first seat of the first apostle, where the Christian religion received its name, where a great meeting of apostles was held, and which would not yield to the See of the city of Rome, except that the latter rejoices in having received and retained to the end that honour which the former obtained only in transition" (Rivington's "Plain Reason," p. 76).

St. Gregory says: "For who does not know that the Holy Church has been established on the solidity of the Prince of the Apostles? . . . And thus, though there be many apostles, yet, in virtue of its very principate, only the See of the Prince of the Apostles, which is the See of one in three places, received supreme authority. For he made that See sovereign, which he honoured by resting in it, and there ending the present life. He distinguished the See to which he sent his disciple the Evangelist. He strengthened that in which he sat himself for seven years, though he was to leave it" (Rivington, p. 40). St. Gregory plainly thinks that there is only *one* "Apostolic foundation," and that all the Churches claiming, in any sense, to be supreme, Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, all derive their authority from St. Peter.

I never heard that the Church of England rested on the succession derived from St. James. The only connection it ever had with Jerusalem, as far as I know, was the establishment of an Anglo-Prussian bishopric in Jerusalem, in opposition to the episcopal succession derived from St. James—



supposing that it is derived from him. Nor did I ever hear that the Church of England was in any way distinguished by particular devotion to the apostles. I cannot, therefore, imagine in what way the Church of England can claim to rest on the "broad four-squared basis of twelve apostolic foundations."

Dr. Mahan seems rather hard upon what he calls the "private interpretationist." He "also is lawless," not because he judges for himself in matters of belief, but because he "uses an arbitrary rule of judgment." But if it is a man's right and duty to judge for himself in matters of belief, and, as we may presume, he exercises his judgment to the best of his power, using the best means of information which come in his way, why is he lawless? It is not reasonable to tell a man that he must judge for himself, and then find fault with him because his conclusions differ from yours. The very idea of judgment is to be arbitrary, and if he does not think that "the Scriptures everywhere bear witness" to your view of the Church, why should you blame him?

I now come back to the consideration of the question with which I started. Have the Ritualists any real and substantial principle as a foundation for all they are doing? or, is their idea only like the mirage of the desert, without any tangible existence?

1. Does Dr. Mahan succeed in establishing any real standing-ground between the system of the Catholic Church, and the extreme Protestant doctrine of private judgment? After all that he has to say about "three-fold witnesses" and so forth, does not the question resolve itself into this: either there is a distinct definite faith given to men, which all are absolutely bound to receive as a matter of duty and

obedience, from which nothing but "invincible ignorance" can excuse them—or not?

If he holds that there is, he is putting forward precisely the Catholic system, except that to suit his theory, it is utterly wanting in those things necessary to give to such a system of revealed truth a concrete existence. It has no formulary of faith, on which it is agreed, and accepts no authority capable of defining what that faith is to be. It is a theory which absolutely requires a complete profession of faith, and yet which has not got one, and has no means of getting one.

If there is no such clear faith given to men, and there is *no* such obligation of believing a distinct faith, then there is clearly nothing left but for each one to believe according to his own private judgment, and objectively, at any rate, it does not very much matter what he believes. In this latter case, all the talk about "the Church" is quite unmeaning.

2. If there is such a definite faith, the Anglican system is liable to all the difficulties and objections which are brought against the Roman system. All that has been said about "spiritual despotism," "intellectual slavery," "absolutism," "dwarfing the reason," and so forth, applies to both equally. If you have to give up your own deliberate opinion, and believe what you are told in spite of it, it really does not matter whether you do so in deference to the judgment of the Pope or in obedience to the decree of a General Council.

If it is a slavery to accept the decrees of the Vatican Council, or the Pope's decree defining the Immaculate Conception, it would also be a slavery to accept a decree made unanimously by all the bishops in the world; so it is also

a slavery to believe in the consubstantiality of the Word defined by the Council of Nicæa. In either case, the submission is just and reasonable if the authority is appointed by God, and a slavery if made to unauthorised men.

All the objections made to the principle of the Catholic Church apply just as forcibly to the system the Ritualist party would establish. Of course objections may be made to particular doctrines taught by the Catholic Church, but the consideration of such difficulties does not belong to the question of the nature of religious authority, of which we are now speaking.

3. Ritualists again try to establish a distinction between faith, as they maintain that it ought to be, and opinion, or private judgment. This distinction, as Dr. Mahan puts it, consists in this, that "it submits itself, not only to the Scriptures, but to the Creed of the Catholic Church (which is the faith once for all delivered at Baptism and is likewise the spirit of Scriptural testimony), and to the sacraments and ordinances and ministry of the Church, duly ordained upon the apostolic foundation." This, however, is no distinction of principle. It is merely an enlargement on the materials on which private judgment is exercised. If each Christian is to judge for himself the meaning of the Scriptures, and also what is the Creed of the Church, and what it means: if he is to form his own judgment as to the nature, meaning, and authority of "the sacraments and ordinances and ministry of the Church": it is hard to see how his system is, in any degree, less "private judgment" than if he simply formed his opinions by reading the Bible only.

It is plain that any number of views can be held,



and are held (and that by intelligent and conscientious people), as to the Creed, sacraments, and ministry of the Church, just as different opinions are held as to the meaning of the Holy Scriptures. If there is no authoritative voice to declare which of these views is the correct one, there is nothing left but simple private judgment.

All this is borne out by the history of the Ritualist movement. It has now been many years at work, and if it had had any substantial principle of its own—any real standing-ground between the principle of the Catholic Church and of private judgment, it could hardly have failed to work out its principle into some tangible shape. It would not have been contented for so many years with vague generalities, but would have, in some degree at any rate, settled the working details of its principle. This is illustrated by the book of which I have been speaking. It was published in 1851, and in the edition before me, in 1877, the notice “to reader” says: “This tract does not pretend to define the limits either of Church authority or of private judgment with theological accuracy.” Why not? If, after twenty-six years, nothing has been done to define those limits without which the system can logically have no concrete existence, may it not fairly be assumed that the principle on which it is founded does not admit of definition and is merely a vague theory, too unsubstantial to be brought into the region of fact?

In 1877 the High Church party had not found out what they considered the limits of the Church, and, as far as I know, they are precisely in the same condition in 1899.

## APPENDIX

### ON INTENTION

**I**N this Appendix I propose to treat, very shortly, of the Catholic doctrine of "Intention." The subject does not in any way belong to the questions I have been discussing, but it is one of great importance, and is sometimes the cause of much difficulty to those who are trying to find their way to the Catholic Church.

"The doctrine of intention," they will say, "throws a doubt over the validity of every sacrament. If I were to hear Mass, or to receive Communion, or to go to Confession, I could never know whether I had really received the sacrament or not. The validity of the action performed depends, not upon external words and actions, about which I can form a judgment, but upon the internal dispositions of the priest who uses these words and performs these actions, about which dispositions, it is clear, I can know nothing."

Now, first, let us understand what *is* the Catholic doctrine about the intention necessary for the valid administration of the sacraments. To ascertain this, let us take an example, and, for illustration, we will make it an extreme one. Let us suppose the case of a bad priest; imagine him to be as bad as you like—careless, irreligious, and

dissipated. Suppose such a one to say Mass, not from devotion, but simply because he cannot help doing so. He goes to the altar, perhaps after a night of dissipation, without a word of preparation, or a good thought, and so hurries over the Holy Sacrifice without an idea beyond getting through it as soon as he can.

A horrible profanation such a Mass would be! Yes, certainly, but as far as his intention goes, the priest would have everything that was necessary, and his Mass would be perfectly valid. If you asked him at any moment what he was doing, he would answer, "Saying Mass, of course"; and, if you questioned him further as to what the Mass was, he would tell you as clearly as the best theologian. The only one thing that would interfere with the validity of his Mass would be an intention to "simulate," that is, if he intended to go through the outward forms *without* doing the thing these outward actions implied. If he had the intention of going through a pretended Mass, and not a real one, undoubtedly his words and actions would have no effect, and there would be no Sacrament and no Sacrifice.

But why must there be an intention? What do we mean by *intention*? Intention is that direction of will to a certain object, by which the words and actions tending to it, become a human act, as far as that end is concerned. If your will is in no way directed to carrying out an end, the accomplishment of that end cannot be considered as morally your act at all, or a human act, as far as the end is concerned, though the particular steps by which it is accomplished may individually be human acts. If you have no knowledge of what will follow from an action, the consequences are not your act, though you may have been



physically the cause of them. A man, walking in his sleep, might set fire to the house; the burning might be the act of his hands, but certainly would not be his act as a moral agent.

All law recognises this distinction, although human law assumes that what a man does is the act of his will, unless the contrary can be shown. If any one is charged with theft, human law looks for the *animus furandi*, and if it is clearly absent, does not consider it a human act, so far as the crime of theft is concerned. So, in a contract or a will, the law looks not to the mere words, but to the *will* and intention of the parties; only, again, it is obliged to assume that words mean what they express, and it cannot generally go beyond what may be gathered from the contents of the document.

Now to apply this to the administration of the sacraments. Our Lord has given to His ministers a certain power, but this power can only be exercised by what is a human act. It is not the mere pronouncement of certain words, the uttering of certain sounds, which will suffice. If so, the power might be exerted by one in his sleep, or not conscious of what words he was uttering, or if he were using the words for some other purpose. Every one, I think, would consider this absurd, and therefore it seems clear that the words used must be an act of the will of the person using them, directed to a certain end, if they are really to exercise a power committed to him.

But there seems another reason for its necessity: the act is one not only of power, but of power which requires limitation to a particular object, and this limitation cannot well be made except by the intention of the agent.

For instance : a bishop ordains or confirms : *who* is ordained or confirmed? any one whom he touches? or who may be within reach of his voice? This seems absurd, and it is difficult to see how any limitation *can* be made, except by the directed *will*, or intention, of the agent himself.

But it may be objected : If a man fired a train of gunpowder, it would certainly explode, whatever might be his intention ; and if he knew the result, he would be responsible for it, if he withheld his intention twenty times. True, but there seems to be this difference between the two cases. The effect, in one case, is produced by a power committed to him, and dependent on his will, and, in the other, by forces quite out of his control. Moreover, the effects to follow in the other case are defined by physical laws, and there can be no doubt as to the extent of the results, whereas in spiritual acts there cannot well be any adequate defining power except the will of the agent to whom they are committed.

The law deals with an *external* intention only, that is, such an intention as is implied by external acts or words, and can be assumed from them, because, obviously, men can go no further, but, in spiritual acts, and in the sight of God, the *real* intention is known, and there is no room for an *assumed* intention. At any rate, the Catholic Church does not consider that an external, or merely assumed intention is sufficient for the valid administration of the sacraments.

There must, then, be a real intention, but it need not be an intention put into words or reflected on. A priest need not say to himself : " I am going to say Mass," or,

"I mean to give absolution"; still less is it required that he should think of the high spiritual importance and dignity of these great offices. It is quite sufficient for his intention, supposing him to be awake, and in his senses, that he should put on his vestments, open his book, and begin. It is impossible for him *not* to have the intention of doing the thing that he is consciously doing, unless he determinately refuses to do this, and means only to pretend to do it.

Moreover, it is *intention* not *attention* that is required. It is not at all necessary that he should have his intention present to his mind throughout: he keeps on doing the action, and the intention perseveres until retracted, though his mind may have ceased to take any note of it.

I say, then, that it is impossible for a man who knows what he is doing, and is in his senses, not to have the necessary intention, unless he has the intention to simulate or pretend to do what he appears to be doing, and yet not to do it. Now let us see what practical difference the doctrine makes. It seems to me to make little or no difference.

If a man really wished to simulate, and pretend to do what he was not doing, I think in the vast majority of cases, he could do so quite as easily whatever was the doctrine of intention. In most cases, there would be no difficulty in leaving out or altering the essential words without the slightest fear of detection. It always must be so when a man has to perform certain prescribed acts in the presence of others who are only imperfectly acquainted with the conditions necessary for the validity of these acts. A physician, for example, could easily



leave out of his prescription the things essential for effect, and so make a sham prescription, without any immediate fear of being found out. So a lawyer could impose on his clients with a sham legal document, and an engineer take in outside people with a machine that would not work, and, for the time at least, nobody would be much the wiser.

I think, therefore, that in practice, a clergyman who intended to simulate could always do so, without the assistance of the doctrine of intention. In the Catholic Church, it is plain that he could do so on all ordinary occasions without the slightest difficulty. In the Mass, the words of consecration must be said secretly, and in Penance, the form of absolution is said secretly quite as often as audibly. It is obvious that, in either case, a priest could omit these without possibility of detection. In these cases it is plain that the doctrine of the necessity of intention makes absolutely no difference, and, generally speaking, it makes exceedingly little. In practice we must rely on the good faith of our brethren, whatever we may believe about the necessary intention, and trust to the fact that they are men, and not monkeys.

When I say that it would always be easy enough to simulate, it must, of course, be understood that there *is* something to simulate. If there is nothing in the words or actions beyond the immediate effect they produce on the senses, it is obviously impossible to simulate. You cannot simulate a sermon, or reading prayers ; their efficacy depends precisely and solely on the effect they produce on the sense, and a simulation which would produce the same effect, must be the same thing. For this reason you cannot

simulate a picture, since to produce (completely) the effect of a picture, it must be the picture itself.

The moment, however, you come to anything sacramental, and have to do with words of power, and actions that do something besides striking the senses, there must always be room for simulation, since it must always be possible to pretend to do what is necessary, and yet not do it in effect.

The alleged difficulty—that you never can know with certainty whether you are receiving the sacraments or not—seems to arise, not from the Catholic doctrine of intention, but, necessarily, from the fact of there being sacraments. When there is nothing to simulate, there can be no simulation.

I should like, however, to go a little more deeply into the question of certainty, and to consider whether there is any real ground for uncertainty in the reception of the sacraments.

It may be said that even if, as I argue, the doctrine of intention makes very little difference, still, by my own admission, there is a great deal of uncertainty as to all these sacramental acts. It might, for example, easily happen that by carelessness, or unavoidable mistake, the matter employed was not that necessary for the validity of the sacrament, and, indeed, that many instances are reported of mistakes which would certainly render the sacrament null. Again, a priest might forget to pronounce the necessary form, from old age, absence of mind, if not through carelessness; and, moreover, it is quite possible that the priest may never have been validly ordained.

A story, indeed, is told of a servant who got hold of his dead master's papers, and passed for years as a priest, pretending to perform all his sacred functions. Whether this is true or not, it certainly might happen, and, therefore, in any particular case, we cannot have any certainty as to the validity of the sacraments. What has happened once may happen again, and for what we know, the sacraments we are receiving may be invalid.

Now, first, to touch a wider difficulty ; Can we have any certainty that there is any valid priesthood remaining on earth? It is argued that the question whether any one is "a priest by succession from the apostles, depends on the question whether, during that long period, some thousands of events took place, any one of which may, without gross impropriety, be supposed not to have taken place," and that "there is not a tittle of evidence for any one of these events," and that, "of ten thousand probables, no one should be false, that of ten thousand requisites, whereof any one may fail, not one should be wanting," is so extremely improbable as to amount to an impossibility. To this argument we answer simply that we know by the certainty of faith that the priesthood has not failed, whatever may be the antecedent possibilities, because it is an integral part of the Catholic Church. If we believe, as we do, that the Church is a body appointed by God to perform certain functions, in a certain manner, to the end of time, we are absolutely certain that He has so watched over His Church, and so overruled events, that no accident has ever vitiated the priesthood which He entrusted to His Church, by which alone these functions can be performed. We see plainly in history that His Providence has so wrought as to preserve



the priesthood externally, and as far as the eyes of men can follow it, and we have not the slightest doubt that a corresponding secret Providence has guarded against those hidden defects to which all human things are subject of their own nature.

It would be an absurdity, and almost a contradiction in terms, to maintain that our Lord established and guaranteed His Church; that He upheld it through all ages by His Providence against the powers of the world, and yet allowed it to fail from secret causes which are beyond the reach of men. If we believe in the Church at all, then, we cannot possibly have any doubt as to the genuineness and apostolic descent of her priesthood.

I think it well here to introduce a long quotation from one of Cardinal Newman's later works, which treats of this subject in a most lucid manner, particularly as I do not think the passage is as well known as it might be. It is from a note, written by him as a Catholic, on his original essay "On the Catholicity of the Anglican Church."\*

Having shown very clearly the extreme uncertainty of Anglican Orders, he proceeds: "But now, secondly, comes the question whether the argument used above against Anglican, may not be retorted on Catholic Ordinations; for it may be objected that, however Catholics may claim for themselves the tradition of doctrine and rite, they do not profess to be secure against bad ecclesiastics any more than Protestants; that there have been times of ignorance, violence, unscrupulousness, in the history of the Catholic Church; and that, if Anglican Orders are untrustworthy because of the chance mistakes in three hundred years,

\* "Essays, Critical and Historical," vol. ii., p. 34.

much more so are Catholic, which have run a whole eighteen hundred. In short, that I have but used against the Anglican ministry the old, notorious argument of Chillingworth and Macaulay, an argument which is of a sceptical character in them, and, in a Catholic, suicidal also.

“Now, I do not well know what is meant by calling such an argument sceptical. It seems to me a very fair argument. Scepticism is the refusal to be satisfied with reasons which ought to satisfy. To be sceptical is to be unreasonable. But what is there unreasonable, what extravagant in idea, or inconsistent with experience, in recognising the chance of important mistakes, here or there, in a given succession of acts? I do, certainly, think it most probable, that an intricate series of ordinations through three hundred years, and much more, through eighteen hundred, will have flaws in it. Who does not think so? It will have them to a certainty, and is in itself untrustworthy. By ‘untrustworthy in itself,’ I mean humanly speaking; for if, indeed, there be any special protection promised to it, beyond nature, to secure it against errors and accidents, that, of course, is another matter; and the simple question is whether this or that particular succession has such a promise, or in other words, whether this or that succession is or is not apostolical. It is usual for Anglicans to say, as we say, that they have ‘the Apostolical Succession’; but that is begging the question. If a succession be apostolical, then, indeed, it is protected from errors; but it has to be proved apostolical before such protection can be claimed for it; that is, we and they, both of us, must give reasons, in our own case respectively, for this our critical assumption of our being apostolical,

“We, Catholics, do produce our reasons, that is, we produce what are commonly called ‘the Notes of the Church,’ by virtue of those reasons we consider we belong to that Apostolical Church, in which were at the beginning stored the promises : and, therefore, our succession has the Apostolic promise of protection, and is preserved from accidents, or is apostolic : on the other hand, Anglicans must give reasons on their part for maintaining that they too belong to the Apostolic Church, and that their succession is Apostolic. There is, then, nothing unfair in Macaulay’s argument, viewed in itself ; it is fair to both of us ; nor is it suicidal in the hands of a Catholic to use it against Anglicans, if, at the same time, he gives reasons why it cannot by opponents be used against himself. Let us, then, look at the objection more closely.

“Lord Macaulay’s remarks on the Apostolic Succession, as contained in one of his reviews, written with the force and brilliancy for which he is so well known, are far too extended to admit of insertion here ; but I will quote a few words of his argument from its beginning and ending. He begins by laying down, first, that whether an Anglican clergymen ‘be a priest by succession from the apostles, depends on the question whether, during that long period, some thousands of events took place, any one of which may, without any gross impropriety, be supposed not to have taken place ;’ and next, ‘that there is not a tittle of evidence for any one of these events.’ Then, after various vivid illustrations of his argument he ends by a reference to Chillingworth’s ‘very remarkable words,’ as he calls them. ‘That of ten thousand probables, no one should be false, that of ten thousand requisites, whereof any one



may fail, not one should be wanting, this to me is extremely improbable, and even cousin-german to impossible.'

"I cannot deny, certainly, that Catholics, as well as the High Anglican school, do believe in Apostolic Succession of ministry, continued through eighteen hundred years: nor that they believe it to be necessary to an Apostolic ministry, nor that they act upon their belief. But, as I have said, though so far the two parties agree, still they differ materially in their respective positions, relatively towards that succession, and differ, in consequence, in their exposure respectively to the force of the objection on which I have been dwelling. The difference of position between the two may be expressed in the following antithesis: Catholics believe their Orders are valid, because they are members of the true Church; and Anglicans believe that they belong to the true Church because their Orders are valid. And this is why Macaulay's objection tells against Anglicans, and does not tell against Catholics.

"In other words, our apostolic descent is to us a theological inference, and not primarily a doctrine of faith; theirs necessarily is a first principle in controversy, and a patent matter of fact, the credentials of their mission. That they can claim to have God's ministers among them, depends directly and solely on the validity of their Orders; and to prove their validity, they are bound to trace their succession through a hundred intermediate steps, till at length they reach the Apostles; till they do this their claim is in abeyance. If it is improbable that the succession has no flaws in it, they have to bear the brunt of the improbability: if it is presumable that a special

Providence precludes such flaws, or compensates for them, they cannot take the benefit of that presumption to themselves : for, to do so, would be claiming to belong to the true Church, to which that high Providence is promised, and this they cannot do without arguing in a circle, first proving that they are of the true Church because they have valid Orders, and then that their Orders are valid because they are of the true Church.

“ Thus, the Anglican Succession is to Anglican divines a *sine quâ non*, not *necessitate præcepti sed necessitate medii*.” Their succession is indispensable to their position, as being the point from which they start ; and, therefore, it must be unimpeachable, or else they do not belong to the Church ; and to prove it is unimpeachable by the special Providence of God over His Church, would be like proving the authority of Scripture by those miracles of which Scripture alone is the record. It must be unimpeachable before, and without, taking that special Providence into account, and this I have said above cannot be.

“ We, on our side, on the contrary, are not in such a dilemma as this. Our starting-point is not the fact of a faithful transmission of Orders, but the standing fact of the Church, the Visible and One Church, the reproduction and succession of herself age after age. It is the Church herself that vouches for our Orders, whilst she authenticates herself to be the Church, not by our Orders, but by her Notes. It is the great Note of an ever-enduring *cætus fidelium* with a fixed organization, a unity of jurisdiction, a political greatness, a continuity of existence in all places and times, a suitableness to all classes, ranks and callings, an ever-energizing life, an untiring, ever-evolving history,

which is her evidence that she is the creation of God, and the representative and home of Christianity. She is not based upon her Orders, she is not the subject of her instruments ; they are not necessary for her idea.

“We could even afford, for argument’s sake, to concede to Lord Macaulay the uncertainty of our succession. If Providence had so willed, she might have had her ministers without any lineal descent from the Apostles at all. Her mere nomination might have superseded any rite of ordination ; there might have been no indelible character in her ministers, she might have commissioned them, used them, and recalled them at her pleasure.

“She might have been like a civil state in which there is a continuation of office, but not a propagation of official life. The occupant of the See of St. Peter, himself made such by mere election, might have made bishops and un-made them.

“Her Divine Founder has chosen a better way, better because He has chosen it. A transmission of ministerial power ever has been and ever shall be ; and He who has so ordained, will carry out His ordinance, preserve it from infraction, or make good any damage to it, because it is His ordinance, but still that ordinance is not simply of the essence of the Church ; it is not more than an inseparable accident and a necessary instrument. Nor is the apostolic descent of her priests the direct warrant of their power in the eyes of the faithful ; their warrant is her immediate, present, living authority ; it is the word of the Church that marks them out as the ministers of God, not any historical or antiquarian search, or genealogical table ; and while she



is most cautious and jealous that they should be ordained aright, yet it is sufficient in proof of their ordination that they belong to her.

“Then it would appear, that to Catholics the certainty of Apostolical Orders is not a point of prime necessity, yet they possess it; and for Anglicans it is absolutely indispensable, yet they have it not.”

This long argument is rather a digression from the subject of this Appendix on the doctrine of intention, but it is so interesting and so powerful that I cannot leave it out. It is most conclusive as to the certainty of Holy Orders in the Catholic Church generally, but we must observe that it does not apply to individual cases. It is not necessary for the indefectibility of the Catholic Church that her sacraments should in all cases be guarded from the ordinary chances of human life. It may, therefore, happen that sacraments are sometimes rendered null by carelessness or fraud. A man might pretend to be a priest, never having been ordained at all, or he might have been invalidly ordained, or a true priest might by oversight or malicious intention celebrate invalidly. It remains, therefore, to ask: Does this interfere with the practical certainty which Christians require in the sacraments they receive?

To this I answer that the certainty which we have in receiving the sacraments is just that which we commonly have in the ordinary affairs of life, on which we act habitually, to which we unhesitatingly commit our lives and fortunes, and which, in fact, is a real certainty.

For instance, a man is dangerously ill, and sends for a noted physician: some one arrives in due course, and takes

charge of the case. Very likely no one knows him personally, and it is certainly quite possible that an impostor may have got into the doctor's carriage; that his butler may have dressed up to represent him. Such things I daresay have happened before now, but who dreams of taking remote possibilities into account?

Again, do you know your own father and mother? or your own children? or does a husband know his own wife? It cannot be denied that many instances are on record where children have been deceived by pretended parents, and that one child has sometimes been substituted for another. Again, it is common enough, in novels at any rate, for a man to find out that his supposed wife has been married to some one else, and is not really his wife at all. It cannot be denied that such deceptions have many times been detected, and, no doubt, have more frequently still escaped detection.

Now let us ask: Have these possibilities in practice *any* weight at all? What would you think of any one who troubled himself about them, unless there was some real ground for doubt beyond the abstract possibility? Suppose, for example, a man said: I cannot treat my parents and children and my wife as if they were certainly such, not because I have the smallest ground of suspicion, but because I have heard that mistakes have been known to occur? I think any one who acted in this way would be considered a fool and a brute. Have you, in fact, the smallest doubt as to your parents? You remember them in childhood, you knew their love and tenderness to you, and all their good qualities, and perhaps tended them on their death-beds, and have no more practical doubt as to their

being your parents than you have of your own identity. Yet you cannot prove it, or deny that there are possibilities against it. So of your wife and children, whatever the theoretical possibilities may be, you have not really the smallest doubt. You cannot, indeed, deny that cases of imposture *have* happened, and might happen any day, but that does not in the least affect the unhesitating certainty which you feel in your own case.

It is precisely the same with regard to the sacraments. You cannot indeed deny that mistakes have been made, that false sacraments have before now deceived men, and might do so again, but, notwithstanding, in the absence of any reasonable ground of suspicion, you have not the smallest misgiving but that the Mass you are going to attend will be a valid one, that Father So-and-so is a true priest, and that he will celebrate with the necessary matter, form, and intention.

But it may be said that the sort of certainty which we have in matters of this world is not sufficient when our eternal salvation is concerned. To this I reply that God has given us the sacraments to be used by men, and therefore it is clear that He intends us to use them in the only way possible for men; that is, with the care and diligence which we employ in our most serious worldly affairs. If men were to trouble themselves about remote and theoretical possibilities, it would be plainly impossible to use the sacraments at all. The Church sets us the example, since, though she uses all possible and rational care to secure the validity of the sacraments, she simply disregards all such imaginary doubt, and never will allow



sacraments to be repeated unless there is some very tangible ground for supposing them to be invalid.

The sacraments are, indeed, the ordinary channels by which God supplies us with His grace, but He can give His grace as He will, and watches over His sacraments, and is able to make good the defects to which all human instruments are necessarily subject.

The sacraments are simply the tools which He has put into our hands, and if we use them carefully and diligently, as He intends them to be used, we need not have the slightest fear that they will break and pierce our hands, because, in some way or other, He will certainly supply any deficiency which comes, not from our own fault, but from causes beyond our control.











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